

There are only remains of the outer city walls, the once high and magnificent gate towers now little more than wooden skeletons. **Page 16**



This show is like nothing else you'll see right now. This is the birth of the gallery and the freshness of the pieces reflects that. **Page 10**



Generous and fast-talking, Namu claims to be the only Mosuo yuppie in Beijing. **Page 9**



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Smog Grounds Aerial Acrobats

By Chu Meng

Heavy Autumn haze dashed the hopes of aircraft enthusiasts yesterday to see a display of aerial acrobatics by one of the world's leading stunt flying troupes.

The aerobatics show by the internationally renowned Patrouille de France was cancelled at the last minute due to poor visibility at Nanyuan airport in the south of Beijing. The performance was scheduled to start at 2:30 yesterday.

The show, which was also to have featured an exhibition by the People's Liberation Army air-force parachute jumping team, was to have been broadcast live by China Central Television.

Sponsored by the Foreign Affairs Office of the Ministry of National Defense and the PLA China Air Force, the performance by Patrouille de France was to have opened the French Cultural Year in China, marking the 40th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between France and China in 1964.

Cai Shukun, a senior colonel in the Chinese Air Force, told *Beijing Today*, "Our military dedicated great efforts to prepare for this event, from as early as May this year. So much work has gone into it in terms of governmental and military communications between China and France and security preparations. It is a great pity."

Poor visibility

Gilles Combarieu, Patrouille de France public relations officer, explained to *Beijing Today* half an hour after the cancellation of the show was announced, "The decision to cancel the exhibition was made by our team's flight leader. It was entirely due to meteorological factors. We wanted to fly! The purpose for us to travel tens of thousands of kilometers to China was to fly! Actually, we will be in Beijing until Tuesday, and we can take off at any minute of any day until then, as soon as the weather conditions get better."

Combarieu also said that a private show on Sunday for senior government officials and military officers, which is also to be attended by French President Jacques Chirac, will also only go ahead "weather permitting."

During a rehearsal for the show at Nanyuan airport Wednesday, Anne Eeckhout, another of the group's public relations officers, told *Beijing Today*, "I feel very proud that our performance for the people of Beijing is to be the first part of the celebration. During more than 50 performances every year in different countries around the world, we have never flown above such a vast territory as China. Moreover, we were also very honored to be invited to give an exclusive show for Chinese government officials and military officers, as well as our president Jacques Chirac."

Eeckhout said that the aerobatics team left France on September 24, stopping off in over ten countries en route to Beijing, including Italy, Greece, Jordan and South Korea. "Each time we stopped, we just enjoyed a little relaxation, made some minor adjustments, but there were no performances along the way."

"I am so happy that I can have this chance to travel to China. We



A rehearsal by the Patrouille de France on Wednesday at Nanyuan airport attracted thousands of spectators. Due to poor visibility, the team could not perform their most difficult routines. **Photo by Chen Bai**

International Aerobatics Teams

USAF Thunderbirds

Formed in 1953 in Arizona, the USAF Thunderbirds aerobatics team is currently based at Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada. While most international display teams fly trainer aircraft, the USAF has always used front-line fighter aircraft.

British Red Arrows

The British Royal Air Force Aerobatics Team, the Red Arrows flies nine BAe Hawk advanced trainer aircraft and are

currently based at RAF Scampton in Lincolnshire. They were formed in 1965 using the Folland Gnat.

Italian Frecce Tricolori

The Frecce Tricolori team of Italy flies ten MB-339PAN aircraft. Formed in March 1961, and based at Rivolto, Italy, they are the only display team to fly ten aircraft, and have earned a reputation as the most flamboyant display team to watch in Europe.



Public relations officer Anne Eeckhout

French people, we respect Chinese culture very much. There are many attractive, unique, traditional things here, for example silk and real Chinese cuisine," she said. "Although we have to keep to an extremely rigid diet the military specially prepared for us, I really cannot help but try some real Chinese food. We only stay in Beijing for five days, so my biggest wish is to satisfy my tummy!"

Wang Jiabin, deputy general manager of Beijing Guofang Science and Technology Exhibition Company, the promoter and organizer of the air show, told *Beijing Today* Monday, "It is also the first time in some 50 years for an international-class flying performance to be held publicly in China. After Beijing, the team will head to Wuhan, Zhuhai and Hong Kong as France's official Flying Ambassadors of Friendship."

One of the team's maintenance officers Gilles Granier, told *Beijing Today*, "the base-line weather condition for our performance is five kilometer visibility in the air. Now this index is only two kilometers, as everybody can see. This has rarely happened when we have given performances in other countries in the past."

The audience, who had paid between 150 and 2,800 yuan for a ticket to the airshow, were obviously surprised when the cancellation was announced, and many were reluctant to leave the airfield at first. Although only 11,000 of the 50,000 available

tickets to the show were sold, few took up the promoter's offer of an immediate refund, preferring to wait for the show to be rescheduled once the weather improved.

A Mr. Liu, who was at the airfield with his wife and daughter, told *Beijing Today*, "I came from Heilongjiang Province to see my daughter who works in Beijing. We have been looking forward to seeing the airshow for such a long time!" He added that they would hold on to their tickets for a few days, in the hope that the sky would clear up enough for the show to go on.

About the team

The Patrouille de France Aerobatics Team consists of ten Alpha Jet E twin-engine aircraft, two logistical support aircraft and one C-130 personnel transport. There are more than 80 crew members, including nine aerobatics pilots with one alternate member, and ten maintenance crew.

Based in Salon de Provence, Patrouille de France have given some 2,000 performances since the ensemble was established in 1953, flying in the famous Alpha Jet E twin-engine training and attack aircraft. Their routine is full of grace and flair and they are rated as one of the top five aerobatics teams in the world.

The principle mission of the team is to raise international awareness about French military aeronautical professionalism. Some 60 million spectators in over 30 countries have witnessed the virtuosity of their flying since the group was founded.

Since 1953, 170 pilots have participated in 2,000 flying shows, putting in over 135,000 flying hours. Each year, the team takes part in more than 50 performances from April to October. The routines are changed and updated every year, so the pilots have to practice right through the off season.

The Alpha Jets are painted blue, white and red, the colors the French national flag, which stand for liberty, equality and fraternity.

Parachuting Show Marred by Tragedy

By Wang Fang/Wei Lixin

A show of daring parachute jumping went from triumph to tragedy on Tuesday when an Australian jumper's chute failed to open as he plunged from the 89th floor of the Jinmao Tower in Shanghai. On Wednesday, doctors at the Shanghai Dongfeng hospital where Roland Simpson, 35, was receiving treatment, told reporters that he was brain dead.

Simpson was making a trial jump as one of 38 experienced parachutists from 16 countries taking part in the second Shanghai International Parachute Jumping Show when he jumped from the 420.5-meter Jinmao Tower, the highest building in China. The reason his parachute failed has yet to be determined.

Earlier in the day, Ding Jianping of China leapt off the tower and landed safely, making him the first Chinese in the country known to have executed a successful low altitude parachute jump, also called a base jump.

A photographer on the spot told a reporter from Sina.com that the accident occurred around 7:20 Tuesday morning. He said that Simpson pulled the ripcord too late for the parachute to open completely and landed on one of the tower's supporting struts.

A veteran base jumper, Simpson had taken over 1,000 similarly dangerous plunges.

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Time Not Ripe to Unpeg Yuan or Join G7

By Wei lixin

Finance ministers and central bankers from the world's seven richest nations (G7) met in Washington last Friday. For the first time, Chinese finance minister Jin Renqing and governor of the People's Bank of China, Zhou Xiaochuan, held informal talks with their counterparts at the summit.

The meeting attracted close international scrutiny. In the long term perspective, it is seen as a crucial moment for China to re-examine its position in international relations. China's foreign exchange rate regime was a key topic at the summit, which is undoubtedly a prickly subject.

As the world's seventh-largest economy, China plays a far more significant role in the world economy these days than before, as such, many analysts argue that an invitation to participate in the

G7 meetings on a formal basis is desirous.

However finance minister Jin Renqing played down such speculation. During a press conference in Washington on Saturday, he said China's participation in the G7 talks did not mean the country is to find a seat at the rich nation's club, because China is still among the developing countries. There is a wide gap between China and the western developed countries, so the summit should be seen as "G7 plus one" rather than G8.

"We have no immediate plans to join the G7," Jin said, "We are here to promote mutual understanding, our ability to participate in the world's economic affairs and our own interests," adding that China remained interested in continuing the high-level dialogue.

During the talks, the exchange rate system of the renminbi was

discussed, but China did not make any concrete commitment on adoption of a flexible exchange rate. Jin indicated that in the reform on China's exchange rate system, matters including economy, society, international balance of payments and banking system should be considered as a whole, meanwhile the stability of nearby countries and worldwide financial status should also be taken into account.

Jin stressed that stability of the yuan is not only favorable for China, it is also favorable for the steady growth of the Asian and global economies. China has kept its currency pegged at a rate of 8.28 to the US dollar, despite growing pressure to adopt a more flexible and market-based mechanism.

US treasury secretary John Snow stated in a news release issued after the summit, "China is experiencing sweeping reform of

its financial system, they are now taking action." He also confirmed that the US was not demanding a fixed timetable for the adoption of a market mechanism for China's exchange rate system and requested simply that it be "as soon as possible."

Before the G7 summit, the US and China issued a joint statement on economic and financial issues after a joint Sino-US Economic Committee meeting last Thursday.

In the statement, China reaffirmed its commitment to working toward a market-based, flexible exchange rate and the US expressed support for China's endeavor to join the Inter-American Development Bank.

"The Chinese affirmed that they would continue to implement market-oriented reforms to promote sustainable and long-term growth in China," the statement said.

According to statistics from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), ship manufacturing in China will total over 8 million tons this year, accounting for 15 percent of the world's total. Xinhua Photo



Overseas Investment Exceeds \$33.2 Billion

By Wei Lixin

China had established 7,470 non-financial enterprises overseas in more than 160 countries and regions by the end of 2003, with direct investment from China exceeding \$33.2 billion.

The figures are published in the *Official Journal of China Overseas Direct Investment in 2003*, jointly issued by the Ministry of Commerce and the State Statistic Bureau on September 7.

According to the journal, mining, manufacturing, wholesale and retailing and business services constitute 92.5 percent of total net direct investment from China.

Yang Zong, a professor at the Business School of Nanjing University, pointed out that China's direct investment focus on those industries boasts certain advantages over other countries, such as large scale domestic production capacity, relatively stable core techniques, reliable quality and being gener-

ally labor-intensive.

Many famous brands in China have achieved success overseas. TV manufacturer TCL has set up two production lines in Vietnam with an annual capacity of 500,000 TV sets and 300,000 digital cameras; Gree Electric Appliances manufactures air conditioners in Brazil; ZTE Communications Corporation has set up a factory in Pakistan; Haier Group has 13 factories worldwide as well as nine original equipment manufacturers overseas producing goods with the Haier trademark.

Meanwhile, many Chinese enterprises have set up research and development centers and design centers overseas to make sure their products fit the demands of local people.

Minister of commerce Bo Xilai was quoted by Xinhua on Sunday as saying that China will become the fifth largest origin of direct investment based on data from United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

Ranking System Introduced for Medical Manufacturers

By Annie Wei

The State Food and Drug Administration has released a temporary regulation on a credit-ranking system for domestic drug and medical equipment manufacturers, according to last Thursday's *Shanghai Morning Post*.

The regulation says manufacturers, distributors and developers will be ranked into four credit grades: Reliable, Warning, Discreditable and Seriously Discreditable, and will be offered benefits or sanctioned according to their grading.

A spokesman for the Shanghai Food and Drug Administration was quoted in the arti-

cle as saying Shanghai had started setting up an information database.

A company is ranked as reliable so long as it does not infringe any regulations; Any company that receives a warning from the authorities is ranked accordingly, and a company found to have seriously violated regulations or laws is ranked as discreditable.

Companies ranked as reliable will face reduced scrutiny and be granted priority in administrative procedures; warned or discreditable companies will be exposed publicly and inspected more frequently, while seriously discreditable companies will be black-listed.

Sichuan Seeks International Bids for Nuclear Power

By Annie Wei

Sichuan's Development and Reform Commission will name two potential sites for feasibility studies on building nuclear power stations by the end of the year, according to last Thursday's Sichuan-based *Tianfu Morning News*. The commission will seek partial funding for the construction of the power stations from international investment.

According to the article, four possible locations, in Nanyun, Luzhou and Yibin, have been evaluated as qualified by nuclear experts during a meeting held at the Chengdu Jinjiang Hotel on September 15.

Dr. Li Guodong from the Commission was quoted as saying that nuclear power stations require a large supply of water, so the sites will be targeted in the Yangtze, Jialing and Min river areas.

Although the coastal provinces of Guangzhou and Zhejiang are the main focus for building nuclear power stations, Sichuan, as the cultural and economic center of southwest China, also consumes a vast amount of energy.

According to a provisional plan, nuclear power stations are expected to provide 2 million-kilowatts annually by 2015 and 4 million-kilowatts by 2020.

Li also stated in the article that reaching the 4 million-kilowatt goal would require a 40 billion yuan investment. The article said that China National Nuclear Corporation and Guangdong Nuclear Power Holdings would invite public bidding for the projects in Beijing by the end of the year, and already, a number of foreign companies have expressed interest in bidding.

China Elected First Class ICAO Member

By Annie Wei

With 150 votes out of 159, China was elected as a first-class council member of International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) at the 35th session of the assembly in Montreal Saturday, according to a Xinhua report on the same day.

A spokesman for the Chinese delegates was quoted as saying that the high number of positive votes was an indication that China's aviation sector was recognized internationally.

The sector has boomed recently, with annual growth in transportation, passengers and goods at 18, 16 and 16 percent respectively.

The ICAO was established in December 1944, with 36 permanent seats and now has 188 member countries. Its main purpose is to regulate international civil aviation matters.

Foreign Banks Encouraged to Open in North-east

By Sun Yongjian

China's banking watchdog is to fast track applications by foreign banks to establish branches in the country's north-east.

Tang Shuangning, vice president of the China Banking Regulatory Commission (CBRC) said in a speech on September 26 that the CBRC will encourage foreign banks to set up branches and open for business, as well as to purchase stakes in domestic institutions in north-eastern China.

While the criteria for such applications to be accepted will be the same as in other regions, applications to enter this region will enjoy some priorities, Tang said.

Foreign financial institutions should be actively introduced into this region with the aim of promoting advanced administrative experience and improving service quality.

To implement the central authorities' policy of rejuvenating the economy of this region, financial institutions, especially the banking industry, should receive greater support, Tang stressed.

According to statistics released by the CBRC, by the end of August, 2004, there were almost 23,000 banking institutions and branches in the north-east, only nine of which were foreign institutions.

Infrastructure Projects Put on Hold

By Qiu Jiaoning

A total of 4,150 infrastructure projects with an investment value of 844.1 billion yuan have been suspended nationwide since April this year, China Radio International reported last Saturday.

The National Development and Reform commission released the figures after surveying 70,600 infrastructure projects with a total investment of 17,274.4 billion yuan.

Some of the halted projects have been cancelled, while others have been temporarily suspended pending a review.

The projects mainly include government office buildings and training centers, city railway transit systems, golf courses and shopping malls.

Construction to Start on Undersea Tunnel

By Qiu Jiaoning

China's first undersea tunnel, the Xiamen East Tunnel project will start construction by the end of this year, *Beijing Times* reported Tuesday. The six-kilometer undersea tunnel will comprise the main part of the East Tunnel linking Xiamen's Xiangan District with Wutong on Xiamen Island.

The East Tunnel, which will have a total length of 9 kilometers and cost 3.28 billion yuan, is due to be completed in 2010. As the third important access to Xiamen Island, it will be a dual three-lane highway designed to connect national, provincial and urban road networks.

Certified Accountants Prohibited from Collecting Tax

By Qiu Jiaoning

The State Administration of Taxation has announced that tax authorities at all levels are not permitted to authorize certified accountant offices to collect taxes, Xinhua News Agency reported Sunday.

Certified accountants offices are seen as a bridge between enterprises and tax administration, however violations of regulations have occurred stemming from improper relationships with tax authorities.

Tax authorities at all levels have been ordered by the administration to improve law enforcement on tax collection and management this year. Basic information on all certified accountant offices is to be made public by tax authorities.

Aerial Photography Regulations Announced

By Annie Wei

The State Administration of Radio, Films and Television (SARFT) issued a regulation on procedures related to aerial photography, the *Beijing Times* reported Monday.

The move follows a spate of accidents in recent years that occurred due to lack of adequate regulations and supervision.

Use of aerial photography is becoming increasingly common in television, according to SARFT, and involves greater risks than in normal flight. Regional authorities are required to formulate relevant management procedures for television aerial photography, such as strict application procedures and conditions under which aerial photography is permitted.

When rented aircraft are used for aerial photography, they must be fitted with appropriate safety equipment, according to the regulations, and both sides should sign a legally binding agreement.

The regulations also limit film crews to three persons, and only approved telecommunication equipment may be used during filming. The film crew must also take out insurance before boarding the plane.

Minmetals Purchase Makes History

By Sun Yongjian

Domestic mining and trading firm China Minmetals Corp. is set to take over a leading Canadian mining company, Noranda Inc, once bilateral negotiations are completed, both companies announced through statements posted on their websites on September 24.

"The negotiations are ongoing. We will issue an announcement on our website as early as in November if any agreement can be reached," Denis Couture, vice president of communications for Noranda told *Beijing Today* last Thursday by telephone.

China Minmetals planned to offer \$5.5 billion in cash to buy a 100 percent stake in Noranda, in what would be the first time a Chinese mining en-

terprise had taken over a US-listed company, Couture said.

China Minmetals Corp, an international producer and trader of metals, minerals and electrical products, was listed in the domestic stock market in 1999 and labeled by the central government as one of China's 44 key enterprises.

The primary focus of Noranda's business is the identification of copper and nickel. The company, listed on the New York and Toronto stock exchanges, employs around 15,000 people in offices in 18 countries.

"Together with Noranda's management, expertise, technology and worldwide copper, nickel and zinc operations, we have the potential to

play an even broader role in the global base metals industry," said China Minmetals President Miao Gengshu in the website statement.

US-based Brascan Corp, the major shareholder in Noranda, initiated a plan to auction off the mining firm in May due to its declining business caused by serious internal and external crises. A fire swept through one of the firm's copper smelting factories in July, resulting in a three ton reduction in production, while raised taxes on mining by some South American governments were sure to take big bites out of Noranda's profits in those mineral-rich regions, the *21st Century Economic Report* newspaper said last Saturday.

Among the international giants in-

volved in the auction for Noranda before China Minmetals won were South Africa-based Anglo American and Australia-based BHP Billiton.

The takeover is one of a recent wave of international business purchases by Chinese firms. Shanghai Automotive Industry Corp (SAIC) is set to finalize its acquisition of South Korean carmaker Ssangyong Motor this month and domestic pharmaceutical giant Sanjiu Enterprise Group purchased a majority stake in Japanese drug maker Toa Seiyaku in September.

By the end of 2003, China and Chinese companies had invested \$33 billion in more than 160 countries and regions, according to figures from the China Ministry of Commerce.

Gillette Drops Rhino Razor Partners

By Sun Yongjian

Prominent domestic razor blade brand Rhino will be completely taken over by Gillette after the US-based company severs its connection to joint venture factory in China.

Gillette had decided to give up all its stakes in Shenmei Daily Use Production Company Ltd., a Sino-US joint venture based in Shenyang, Liaoning Province that used to be Gillette's main razor production facility in China, Paul Fox, director of the company's global public relations department, told *Beijing Today* in a telephone interview last Friday.

"We continue to have a collaborative working relationship with Shenmei DUP, but we do plan to end our relationship with this partner, who plans to start a new venture once the separation is complete. We are currently awaiting final approval for the transfer from the Chinese authorities," Fox said.

"We have decided to transfer production of Rhino to a Shanghai-based manufacturer."

That manufacturer is the joint venture Shanghai Gillette Co., Ltd., established in 1992 in Shanghai and now set to hold complete ownership of the Rhino brand.

Gillette and a local company held equal 50 percent shares in Shenmei Daily Use Production when in 1982 they established the company, considered the first joint venture in Liaoning. After years of making solid profits, Gillette applied to increase its stake in the factory to 75 percent in 1998 and the deal went through in 2000, according to information from Shenmei.

Shenmei declined to comment on the separation or the reasons behind it, but an unnamed official from the Shenyang Light Industry Administrative Office told the *China Economic Times* on September 27 that the move was caused by Gillette's high costs in China, forcing the company to trim some branches of its business in order to reduce its expenses.

The official was quoted as saying that Shenmei would become a new joint venture with investment from a Hong Kong company and shift to focus on production of light emitting diodes (LED) over the next six months.



Photo by Imaginechina

Bridgestone to Build Steel Cord Plant in Shenyang

Bridgestone Corp. said Wednesday it will invest \$94.3 million to build a plant in China to produce steel cord for reinforcing tires, as it aims to meet increasing tire demand in China.

The Japanese tire maker said it launched in September a wholly owned subsidiary called Bridgestone (Shenyang) Steel Cord Co. in Shenyang, Liaoning Province that will operate the new plant.

The plant is slated to start production of steel cord for truck and bus radial tires from October

2005 for supply mainly to Bridgestone's tire-making plant in China. The new plant will have 260 workers production capacity of 70 metric tons a day by the end of 2007.

The new plant will be the sixth steel cord plant in the Bridgestone group. Bridgestone currently operates two in Japan, along with its Clarksville plant in the US, a wholly owned subsidiary called Bridgestone (Shenyang) Steel Cord Co. Cagliari plant in Italy and Rayong plant in Thailand. (Dow Jones)

West Passing Its Gas East

By Sun Yongjian

Gas from the Tarim and Changqing fields was pumped to Shanghai at 9 am on October 1, marking the start of normal operation of the massive West-East gas transmission project, the Xinhua news agency reported that day.

Construction of the project, which includes two major lines running from the oil and gas rich Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region and Shaanxi Province to Shanghai and other points in the resource-hungry east, took over two years.

Work began on July 4, 2002, and total investment in the project has surpassed 140 billion yuan (\$16.9 bil-

lion), the report said. Plans call for the new pipelines, which run through the regions, provinces and municipalities of Xinjiang, Gansu, Ningxia, Shaanxi, Shanxi, Henan, Anhui, Jiangsu, Shanghai and Zhejiang, to transmit 12 billion cubic meters of gas a year.

With the pipelines fully operational, gas supplies in China's central and eastern regions are expected to jump to 6.3 billion cubic meters from 1.3 billion cubic meters this year. By the end of 2007, annual gas supplies should reach the final goal of 12 billion cubic meters, Xinhua said.

Xinjiang's Tarim Basin gas

field should replace Shaanxi's Changqing gas field as the nation's largest gas source as of December 1, it said.

Commercial gas supply through the pipeline would be in full swing by January 1, 2005, Jiang Jiemin, president of domestic oil and gas giant PetroChina was quoted as saying.

East China has massive demand for natural gas, and 85 percent of its energy resources are brought in from other parts of the country and abroad. Gas demand in this region was expected to reach 10.5 billion cubic meters in 2005 and 20 billion cubic meters in 2010, unnamed

experts from PetroChina said in the report.

Shanghai is sure to be the largest single user of that gas, consuming 1.5 billion cubic meters of natural gas next year and single-handedly exceeding the annual volume of 700 million to one billion cubic meters originally planned when the project was launched two years ago, according to Xinhua.

In 2003, China became the world's second largest energy consuming nation, trailing only the US. Completion of this massive pipeline project should ease growing pressure on domestic energy supplies, experts said in the report.

Chinese Companies Freed from US Battery Patent Suit

By Annie Wei

The United States International Trade Commission (ITC) on October 2 issued a final ruling negating a patent lawsuit filed by two American battery makers against Chinese competitors, the Xinhua News Agency reported Monday.

In May 2003, US-based Energizer Holdings and Eveready Batter Company sued seven Chinese battery producers for infringing on their US patents for making mercury-free alkaline batteries. Among the domestic companies targeted in the suit were Ningbo Sonluk Battery Co. and Fujian Nanfu Battery Co.

The ITC on June 2 initially ruled against the Chinese companies, but the domestic enterprises demanded a review of the case. In its final judgment, the commission overruled its original decision on October 1, saying that the mercury-free Chinese products did not violate the patent in question and that Chinese companies could continue to export products to the US.

The case is just one of many patent-related lawsuits filed against Chinese companies by US enterprises and organizations in recent years.

Shaanxi Group Takes Over Yinchuan Airport

By Annie Wei

Ningxia Airport Group has become a fully-owned subsidiary of Shaanxi Airport Management Group in a move that should resolve the Ningxia company's outstanding debts, the *Beijing News* said on Tuesday.

The Yinchuan Hedong Airport in the capital of the Ningxia Autonomous Region was taken over by the regional government in April and remolded into Ningxia Airport Group, the newspaper said. The airport's 200 million of debts were also transferred to the government and became a heavy burden.

Regional authorities began talking with other national civil aviation companies about finding a solution to the debt problem, and finally reached an agreement with Shaanxi Airport Management of neighboring Shaanxi Province.

In the deal, all of Ningxia Airport Group's assets, debts and employees were transferred to Shaanxi Airport Management, which also became responsible for taking over further development of the Yinchuan Airport, including the creation of new air routes within Ningxia, the newspaper said.

As *Beijing Today* reported on August 13, the central government is encouraging relatively small scale airports to seek domestic private capital investment while also making the best use of local sources of funds, such as land development and tourism promotion.

51Job Stock Soars on Nasdaq

By Annie Wei

Chinese job search company 51job's shares spiked on New York's Nasdaq stock market on their September 29 initial public offering, sending the stock up over \$8 to \$22.05 per share, Dow Jones newswires reported that day.

The domestic Internet-based company issued 5.25 million initial American depository shares in its IPO priced at \$14 per two-share unit, above expectations of \$11 to \$13.

51job, the biggest recruitment website in China, offers a wide array of services in the areas of recruitment, training and human resources services and serves thousands of small domestic and large multinational corporate clients through 20 offices in Hong Kong and the Chinese mainland.

Its revenues come from advertising on its website and weekly printed publications. 51job started making profits in 2002 and earned 290 million yuan (\$27.5 million) in income in 2003.

Air China IPO Ready to Fly

By Sun Yongjian

Air China International Corp on September 30 set up Air China Ltd., a new enterprise with registered capital of 6.5 billion yuan, the national airline announced in a press release on October 1.

The new company's initial public offering is completely ready and its registered capital will be converted into 6.5 billion shares to be sold at one yuan per share, according to last Friday's *Beijing Youth Daily*.

Air China Ltd. would take charge of scheduled and non-scheduled international and domestic transportation of passengers, cargo, mail and baggage, international and domestic business flights, aircraft maintenance, ground handling and air express services, and in-flight duty-free service, the press release said.

Li Jiaxiang was elected chairman of the board of the new company and Ma Xulun has been named president.

Air China International, the predecessor of Air China Limited, was established in 1988.

Slew of Chinese Channels Hit US TVs

By Wei Lixin

On National Day, October 1, broadcasting of 17 Chinese television channels began in the US with the start of operation of the Great Wall Satellite TV Platform by China International Television Corp (CITVC) and EchoStar Communications Corporation's DISH Network, Chinanews.com reported

last Saturday.

The new channels beamed over the Great Wall TV Platform include CCTV-9, CCTV-Spanish/French, CCTV-Opera, the China Movie Channel, Phoenix InfoNews, Pacvia TV and seven regional stations, including Beijing TV and Shanghai TV. Together with the three channels previously offered on the DISH

Network—the ATV Home Channel, CCTV-4 and Phoenix North America Chinese Channel—they form a complete Chinese television package for American customers.

Two of the new channels feature programming in Cantonese dialect and one in Fujianese dialect, along with CCTV's English and new Span-

ish and French offerings.

The programs are sent through the second largest satellite TV company in the US, EchoStar. EchoStar serves more than 10.1 million satellite TV customers in the and offers hundreds of video and audio channels as well as interactive TV, HDTV, sports and international programming.

Russia's Population Plummets by 458,500 People in 7 Months

Moscow, September 22, (Interfax) – Russia's population fell by 458,500 (0.32 percent) in the January to July period to create a national total of 143.7 million on August 1, according to the Federal Statistical Service.

The natural population loss of 471,300 was the main reason for the decline. The natural loss went down 59,900 compared to the same period last year. Sixteen regions up from 15 in the same period of 2003 posted a natural population growth.

In the first seven months, 58,135 migrants arrived in Russia from foreign countries (79,128 in 2003) while 45,275 left for permanent residence abroad (54,161). Thus, the difference between incoming

and outgoing migration was 12,860 people in January-July this year, down from 24,967 last year.

Analyst's Take:

In recent years, Russia's population has been shrinking at a rate of one million every year. As is well known, most of the developed industrialized countries are facing a decreasing population, but the negative increment for Russia has its own particular reasons.

For one thing, the worsening of the political and economical situation has lowered the standard of living, and the poor population is increasing as a result. Meanwhile, people are reluctant to have babies and the birth rate has sharply declined.

Also, the death rate of labor-age males has increased by 80 percent in recent years because of excessive drinking, injuries at work and medical and health problems.

Thirdly, insufficient funding in the medical system and the health service standard decline, as a consequence, has produced a hike in infectious-disease cases.

Finally, environmental deterioration has also contributed to early deaths in cities. About half of all 16-year-old males will not live to see 60 under the hostile situation.

To solve the population crisis, Russia has no choice but to absorb immigrants. But judging from the present situation, both Russian society and the government are not well pre-

pared for an influx of immigrants. Russia seems to lack tolerance for immigrants, and the media and related government organizations tend to exaggerate the negative influence of illegal immigrants. What is more, according to the Law on Nationality enacted in 2003, the terms are extremely harsh for an immigrant to obtain Russian citizenship. Most government departments and the public consider illegal immigrants a threat, which will bring about social problems and security trouble.

– Xue Fuqi, deputy researcher at the Institute of Russian, Eastern European and Central Asian Studies, at the China Academy of Social Sciences (Wei Lixin)

Cambodia's King Has Abdicated

Phnom Penh, October 7 (Xinhua) – Cambodia's King Norodom Sihanouk has abdicated, the head of the National Assembly announced here Thursday.

The king made the announcement in a letter read to the National Assembly early Thursday by his son Prince Norodom Ranariddh, who is also head of the assembly.

"I ask all compatriots to please allow me to retire," the king's letter said. The king also asked the people to begin a search for a successor, said Ranariddh.

The king asked the country to form a nine-member throne council to consider the next monarch, the statement said.



The King addresses his people in a November 6, 2002, file photo.

Xinhua Photo

The king said in the statement that he asked for the retirement because of his fragile health.

Israelis, American Win Nobel Prize for Chemistry

Stockholm, October 6 (AP) – Two Israelis and an American won the Nobel Prize in chemistry Wednesday for showing how cells can give a "kiss of death" to destroy unwanted proteins, a finding that could help scientists discover new medicines for cancer and other diseases.

It is the first time an Israeli has won a Nobel science prize. Aaron Ciechanover and Avram Hershko, and American Irwin Rose were cited for revealing a process that gives doomed proteins a chemical label and then chops them up.

That process, in turn, governs such key tasks as cell division, DNA repair and quality

control of newly produced proteins, the Royal Swedish Academy of Science said in awarding the prize. But if it goes wrong, diseases like cervical cancer can result, the academy said.

All three will share the \$1.3 million cash prize for their work, done in the 1980s.

This year's award announcements began Monday with the Nobel Prize in medicine going to Americans Richard Axel and Linda B. Buck.

Tuesday, Americans David J. Gross, H. David Politzer and Frank Wilczek won the physics prize for their explanation of the force that binds particles inside the atomic nucleus.

Google Sets up Shop in Ireland

Dublin, October 6 (AFP) – Leading web search engine Google Inc has opened its European headquarters in Dublin, to become the California-based company's first international center outside the United States.

"We have 150 people supporting people in 17 languages as well as technical staff," said Sergey Brin, who founded Google in 1998 with another computer whiz kid Larry Page.

Brin said he expected 240 people to be employed at the headquarters in the next three years.

In August, Google made the

biggest Internet float on the technology-laden Nasdaq index since the 1990s technology bubble, soaring 18 percent on its launch in New York, with the entire company then valued at \$27 billion.

Google's search engine is the world's most used, running 200 million searches a day. The company also licenses its technology to scores of companies, including Internet service provider America Online.

Its information base includes some four billion Web pages. It can search in 97 languages and has a bigger user base outside the United States than within.

Soros Hands Greater Control to Sons

New York, October 5 (Bloomberg) – Billionaire George Soros is handing greater control of his \$12.8 billion money management firm to his sons, Robert and Jonathan, and spinning off his real estate, credit and buyout units, a memo sent to investors and staff said.

Soros' decision to scale back his New York-based firm's operations marks a turnaround from two years ago when he hired Mark Schwartz, a 22-year veteran of Goldman Sachs Group, as chief executive officer to expand the business. In 2002, Soros, who is now 74, said Schwartz's job was "to build an organization that will be preeminent in

money management."

Robert Soros, 41, who last month was named head of the \$8.3 billion Quantum Endowment Fund, and Jonathan Soros, 34, will become co-deputy chairmen of Soros Fund Management LLC, according to the memo, which was released earlier this week. Their father remains chairman.

Robert Soros is the eldest of George Soros' five children. After graduating from New York University in 1986 with a degree in English literature, he joined Soros Fund Management and then left to take other jobs, including a stint at German bank Schroder Munchmeyer Hengst.

Japanese Watchdog Set to File Charges Against UFJ

Tokyo, October 6 (Financial Times) – Japan's banking regulator, the Financial Services Agency, is expected to soon file criminal charges against UFJ and three former senior executives after the bank admitted it had deliberately hoodwinked agency inspectors during an investigation, officials said.

The move adds to the controversy surrounding the battle being fought for control of UFJ between MTFG – the country's third largest bank – and SMFG – the number two lender, but it is unlikely to call into question the completion of the deal, bankers said.

The charges stem from an agency investigation into UFJ



EU to Start Talking Turkey

The European Union's head office Wednesday recommended the start of EU membership talks for Turkey.

Photo by Imaginechina

IMF, World Bank Offer Warning

October 4, (AFP) – A strengthening global economy offers little time for celebration, IMF and World Bank leaders said as they wrapped up meetings at the weekend with an appeal to governments to act boldly to preserve a world-wide recovery.

Although the economy as a whole is in its best shape in three decades, it is threatened by imbalances from currency distortions, sky-high oil prices and a host of other problems such as US deficits and sluggish conditions in Japan and Europe, they said.

"The world economy is strengthening but the recovery has been uneven," British Chancellor of the Exchequer Gordon Brown said after a meeting of the IMF's policymaking International Monetary and Financial Committee, of which he is chairman.

World Bank President James Wolfensohn cited "persistent global imbalances, which require, in particular, readjustment of monetary and fiscal policies in the US, and structural reforms to boost growth in Japan, Europe and elsewhere."

He noted that heavily indebted and oil-importing developing countries "are vulnerable to the combination of rising oil prices and interest rates. Mitigating and managing these risks remain important challenges for us all."

The IMF and World Bank annual meetings echoed the concerns of the Group of Seven economic powers, which were last week joined by China for the first time in recognition of the increasing international weight of its economy.

Local Report:

There is no denying there has been sound economic growth and, at the moment, the economic outlook for next year is promising, but the risks facing a sustained recovery are increasing.

The worst problem is the high oil prices. During the annual meetings, the price for a barrel of crude at the New York futures market hit a new record of US\$50.

And because of increasing demand and a restricted surplus production capacity, it is not likely to decline significantly any time soon. As such, the present and future situation regarding world oil prices were the most important topics discussed at the meetings.

As a result, increasing inflationary pressure and a worldwide rise in interest rates are being realized. But there is also the inbuilt problem of a global economic recovery increasing demand for raw material and energy, which pushes up prices.

Although the pressure on global inflation is not surging, there are worrying signs, which have prompted the US Federal Reserve Board to increase its interest rates three times since July in order to keep a lid on inflation. And although the short term global interest rate is at a relatively low level at present, nations' central banks will have to face the challenge of moving from an extremely stimulated monetary policy to a neutral one. If the transition is not properly handled, there could be problems for global economic growth.

The existing problems and new risks add to the uncertainty of constant global economic growth, and multiply the number of difficulties facing governments that are trying to create development strategies and economic policies.

– China Radio International, October 6 (Wei Lixin)

US, EU Spar Over Airbus, Boeing Subsidies

Washington, October 7 (Reuters) – The United States and the European Union have taken their fight over billions of dollars in subsidies for Airbus and Boeing to the World Trade Organization.

Washington filed a case challenging European loans to help Airbus develop aircraft and terminated a 1992 civil aircraft agreement covering government support for the two top aircraft manufacturers.

The 25-nation EU quickly filed a countercomplaint against US support for Boeing, which over the past decade has lost its position as the world's largest civil aircraft manufacturer to its European rival.

The 1992 agreement allows European governments to finance up to 33 percent of Airbus' cost of developing new aircraft, including \$3.2 billion in loans for the new A380 superjumbo jet. Washington claims Airbus also has received about \$3.3 billion in other government assistance for that project, helping it overtake Boeing.

"Since its creation 35 years ago, some Europeans have justified subsidies to Airbus as necessary to support an 'infant' industry. If that rationalization were ever valid, its time has long passed," US Trade Representative Robert Zoellick said in a statement.

Airbus, which began as a consortium of French, German, Spanish and British companies, is now co-owned by European aerospace company EADS and Britain's BAE Systems.

In its countercomplaint, the EU said Boeing has received some \$23 billion in US subsidies since 1992. That includes about \$3.2 billion in tax breaks from Washington state to persuade Boeing to base production of its 200-to-300-seater 7E7 airplane there, EU officials said.

The US complaint was "obviously an attempt to divert attention from Boeing's self-inflicted decline," European Union Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy said in a statement.

"If this is the path the US has chosen, we accept the challenge, not least because it is high time to put an end to massive illegal US subsidies to Boeing which damage Airbus, in particular those for Boeing's new 7E7 program," he said.

The Beijing Hyundai team walked off the pitch in the 84th minute of their Saturday match against Shenyang Jinde.



Local Football Team

By Zhou Ying

The China Football Association (CFA) on Monday announced it had made a tentative decision to punish the Beijing Hyundai team for its unprecedented withdrawal from a premier league match on Saturday evening in protest of a controversial call by a referee.

After looking into the matter, the CFA said it had decided to award a 3-0 victory to Beijing Hyundai's opponent, the Shenyang Jinde club, dock the Beijing side three points from its total score from league play this season and fine the Beijing Guoan Football Club.

Moreover, the league governing body said inspection of game film proved the questioned call was correct and warned Beijing Hyundai that it would face further penalties if it committed any similar strikes in the future. The CFA announced it would release its final decision on how to deal with the team on October 12.

Beijing Hyundai's Saturday withdrawal from the pitch was the first time any team had boycotted a match in the history of Chinese professional football, and generated a whirlwind of domestic media coverage.

The walk-off occurred in the 84th minute of the match, with the score tied 1-1, after referee Zhou Weixin awarded a penalty

Punished after Bold Strike



After the controversial call, Beijing Hyundai General Manager Yang Zuwu called the club's leader for permission to take his players off the field.

to the host Shenyang side following a melee in which both Beijing's Zhang Shuai and Jinde's Zhang Yang fell inside Shenyang's penalty box, Xinhua reported Tuesday.

As soon as Zhou blew the whistle, he was surrounded by irate Beijing players, including Yang

Pu, who made an obscene gesture towards the referee, the *Beijing Times* said on Sunday.

"First, one of our foreign players was irrationally fouled out, and then he awarded a penalty to the hosts. It was the last straw, we couldn't stand it," Yang Zuwu,

Beijing Hyundai general manager, was quoted as saying.

At a press conference after the game, He Bing, manager of the Shenyang Jinde club, said he could not understand Beijing Hyundai's actions. "They could have just appealed to the league after the match if they were not satisfied with the result. Why do something so extreme?" He said.

Yang later said that he partly feared something unfortunate could happen if his enraged players went back on the field, *Beijing Youth Daily* said Sunday.

He also raised eyebrows by publicly expressing concerns about the state of the domestic league. "I hope the CFA can invite judicial departments to investigate increasing incidents of match fixing, corrupt referees and betting on games to create more fair game environments," Yang said.

Yang's outburst struck a nerve with Beijing football fans, who sent in many strongly-written letters to the CFA this week to push the organization and the General Administration of Sport to root out illegal activities and corruption in professional Chinese football.

Some particularly frustrated fans said they would refuse to watch games or purchase any products by league sponsors like Coca-Cola, Adidas and Siemens if the CFA did not clean up its act.

Lawyer Demands Truth from Toothpaste Makers

By Jiang Yongzhu

A Beijing lawyer is advocating the National Industrial and Commercial Bureau prohibit misleading ads in the competitive toothpaste market.

In a letter to the bureau, Qiu Baochang, an attorney at the Beijing Hujia Law Office, accused four toothpaste brands – Tianqi, Colgate, Crest and Xibitai – of cheating customers through exaggerated claims in commercials and said they therefore warranted punishment, the *Beijing News* reported on Tuesday.

Qiu based his argument on China's medicine administration regulations, which stipulate that it is illegal to promote the medical effects of non-medical products.

The packaging of all four brands' products claim the toothpastes can reduce gum inflammation and prevent toothaches, gingivitis, gum bleeding and other dental problems. A Tianqi product makes a further boast to contain "traditional Chinese medicine".

Yang Liandi, a Beijing consumer, filed a lawsuit against the four brands on September 8 for similar charges of misleading people through advertising. That case has yet to be settled.

A lawyer representing Tianqi told the *Beijing News* that the company could provide certified evidence from hospitals that its products have medical effects. A Colgate representative said the brand was awaiting the fair judgment of the court, and Crest and Xibitai did not respond to the newspaper's requests for comments.



The artificial wheat stalks were designed to resist Beijing's powerful fall winds.

Photos by Cui Jun

Sowing Hopes of Future Glory

By Zhou Ying

Thousands of people turned out at the Ditan, or Temple of the Earth, last week to plant artificial wheat seedlings meant as symbols of hope in the park's hallowed ground.

The Beijing Youth Daily-organized activity ended on Thursday morning, the same time the curtain closed on the successful sixth Beijing Book Festival inside the park.

More than ten thousand newspaper readers and others took

part in the six-day event, carefully placing imitation wheat stalks in a special plastic base near the Fangze temple inside Ditan.

The stalks, actually crafted from steel wires and plastic so they would stand straight in the wind, were laid out to spell the words "2008 Beijing" in golden letters.

Liu Han, deputy Chairman of the Beijing Youth Daily and manager of the Beijing Little Red Caps Press Circulation Service, told *Beijing Today* on Tuesday that he conceived the activity after

watching the closing ceremony of the 2004 Athens Olympic Games.

"We just wanted to show the hopes of Beijing and allow local citizens to share in the Olympic spirit," Liu added.

Athens heroes Feng Kun, captain of the gold medal-winning women's volleyball team, and Wang Xu, winner of a women's wrestling gold, were among those that put stalks in the ground. All 400,000 stalks planted during the week were taken away by visitors at the end of the activity as souvenirs.

Bevy of Beauties Descend on Beijing

By Dong Nan

Non-stop efforts to beautify the city got a boost today, when contestants in the 44th Miss International Beauty Pageant arrived in the capital to compete in the October 16 finals at Worker's Stadium.

The finalists, including 22-year-old Beijing native Sun Yue representing China, hail from 70 countries and regions.

It will be the first time for the finals of the event, considered almost on tier with the Miss World and

Miss Universe competitions, to be held outside its home country of the US or Japan in its 44 year history. In the final round, contestants will don traditional costumes, evening wear and bathing suits before the new Miss International is crowned.

The pageant was scheduled to be held in Shanghai last year, but as a result of the SARS outbreak had to be moved to Tokyo. There, the winner's tiara went to Goizeder Azua of Venezuela.



Xiong Yaxian (left), Xiong Yazhou (right) and father Xiong Zhi

Young Twins Replicate Chairman Mao Feat

By Cheng Zheng

A pair of brave twin sisters just five years old made a record-setting swim across the Yangtze River in Chongqing Municipality on September 30, fording the 3,000 meter wide waters in a mere 48 minutes.

Crossing the Yangtze is a traditional show of strength and will, most famously pulled off by Mao Zedong in 1956. Before last week's daring duo, the youngest person to make it across was nine years old.

Twins Xiong Yaxian and Xiong Yazhou, both preschool students in Chongqing's Wanzhou District, took the plunge around 4 pm, after careful preparations and assistance from their father, Xiong Zhi, and coach Yang Lang at Wanzhou port. As they got ready for the long swim ahead, they seemed perfectly relaxed, playing and even doing their homework on the dock.

Once everything was ready, they plunged into the cold water. Accompanied by their father and coach, they casually made their way across the river, alternating swimming styles. A big passing ship threw some large waves the twins' way about 25 minutes into the swim, but the girls continued undaunted thanks to guidance from their coach.

Amazingly, the impressive pair only learned to swim two months before. Yang said he had noticed their remarkable swimming talent immediately.

Before attempting the Yangtze, the girls had done two 4,000 practice swims in nearby waters.

Xiong Zhi told *Beijing Today* on Tuesday the parental secret to his daughters' success: "I don't give them lots of restrictions, I let them develop themselves naturally, which has made them courageous and optimistic."

Festival Fetes Dynamic Duos

By Cheng Zheng

National Day, October 1, in Honglingjin Park looked like the setting of a Guinness world record attempt – on hand was an impressive selection of twin siblings representing a wide range of ages, nationalities and walks of life.

Organizers expected around 100 pairs to take part in the event, but were pleasantly surprised by local enthusiasm, as around 500 sets of twins, triplets and even quadruplets ended up appearing in the park. The oldest on hand were two 69-year-olds, while the

youngest twins were just two months.

Twin-themed performances and activities were held throughout the four-day festival. On October 2, some pairs were invited on stage to join professional entertainers, and the next day featured a special exhibition of unusual twin abilities. Visitors were also invited to pick their favorite pairs.

Following the success of this first running, organizers plan to hold the twins festival every year during the National Day holiday as yet another local tourist attraction.



Belarus Man Jumps out Window in Apparent Suicide

By Jiang Yongzhu

A foreign man fell to his death from the ninth floor of a building in the Houxiandaicheng apartment complex in Chaoyang District on Sunday. Witnesses said they were sure it was a suicide.

Houxiandaicheng residents Mr. Xu and Mr. Bai told the *Beijing Times* that they were chatting out-

side the buildings around 8:30 that morning when they heard a man scream and saw something fall from a building window.

"Then I saw a man, a foreigner, fall and hit the ground head-first," Bai was quoted as saying. The two witnesses immediately called the police.

The manager of the building told

the newspaper that the man, whose name has not been released, was from Belarus and a student at the Central Institute of Fine Arts. He lived in an apartment in the building with his girlfriend.

Local police confirmed the incident, but would not disclose the cause of death or other specific information.



Spectators settle in to the fast lane



Michael Schumacher powers around the Shanghai track in the unmistakable red of Ferrari.

Photos by Photocome

Triumph and Tension at the Chinese F1

By Wang Fang

The first Formula One Grand Prix in Shanghai roared into life towards the end of last month. It was a triumph for the F1 formula and Rubens Barrichello, the driver who greeted the checkered flag in a dominant Ferrari.

Drivers praised the track's challenging corners and overall layout, and the circuit's enormous garages and spacious team pavilions received high marks from pit crews and sponsors alike. The thrill of the event was witnessed by about 200,000 spectators, who sprang to life with the screams of the cars' powerful engines.



Tight curves

And many enjoyed the associated parties and glitzy promotional events which kept downtown Shanghai hopping all week. Even the organizers were happy with the bottom line – an estimated 300 million yuan (\$36.25 million) in earnings.

However, the noise of the engines and fans could not conceal some voices of dissent. Officials say they will need more than a decade to recoup the city's investment for the first event, and given motor racing is new to China it will take some time before enough events are up and running to fully utilize the track. The race was watched by hundreds of millions of

television viewers in China, yet the State-run oil giant Sinopec was the only major Chinese sponsor. Many companies seem to be undecided about the appeal of F1 to Chinese.

Debate is raging on the Internet and within the media in regards to the future of F1 in China. The backers of F1 say the Shanghai event will bring China benefits not only in terms of money but also for the opportunities it will create to develop the nation's sporting enterprises. The knockers claim the decision to hold the event was only a government whim. It cost \$30 million to buy the rights to bring the race

to Shanghai.

Yu Zhifei, deputy general manager of Shanghai International Circuit: **F1 needs China and China needs to stage an F1 event.**

F1 racing is only ever held where a country's economy is active and prosperous, and many of the sponsors of F1 are top 500 companies – and the Chinese event allows us to draw their attention to Shanghai. We are thinking of using the circuit for a street car series and if we can get it up and running and attract lots of spectators, we would be able to export it to other countries, like what

has been happening to F1.

Yang Xiaodu, Shanghai vice-mayor and Chinese F1 Grand Prix Commission director: **F1 is an important platform for the development of the city's service industries.**

F1 can improve the international reputation of Shanghai and China in an effective way. What's more, it can promote the development of the automobile industry and the relevant service industries in Shanghai. This will allow the economic and social development of Shanghai to become more dynamic.

Miao Xiaohan, boss of the Chinese F1 Grand Prix Commission: **F1 has a positive impact on Shanghai's economy and its social development.**

I believe it was worth paying so much money to bring F1 racing to Shanghai. The executive members of many international enterprises will now take the opportunity to visit Shanghai and talk with their would-be partners in China. For example, McLaren visited several Chinese spacecraft enterprises before the grand prix, discussing issues concerning supplies of parts.

Mark Cutler, F1 Racing reporter: **It is hard to imagine that Shanghai paid so much for F1.**

It cost Bahrain \$18 million to buy the rights to host F1. As for the other stops in Asia, it only cost Japan \$9.5 million and Malaysia \$15 million. Obviously, Shanghai paid too much.

Guan Yuqian, a reporter with the Singapore-based newspaper Xinhua Zaobao: **Who is going to pay to watch it?**

A ticket to go to a race is too expensive. It cost almost 20,000 yuan (\$2,415) to buy a ticket on the black market and I think it's not a price that people in Shanghai are willing to accept. Almost 70 percent of the spectators were foreigners, which proves that F1 lacks a local following.

Yu Ming, a veteran analyst of Chinese motor racing: **Local enterprises did not take the opportunity to promote themselves.**

The event was a good platform for Chinese enterprises to combat their international counterparts. However, it's a pity they didn't seize the opportunity. The fundamental reason was that F1 doesn't have enough fans in China and most Chinese CEOs know little about F1. For example, only CCTV and Shanghai International Circuit put their logos the BMW Williams team, while Taikang Life Insurance bought the rights to have its logo on Sauber Petronas products.

Will the Gambling Ban on Shenzhen-based Civil Servants Work?

By Zhaoxi Liu

A new regulation has been introduced banning civil servants in the city of Shenzhen, in the southern province of Guangdong, from playing mah-jong for money and being involved in "other forms of gambling."

Last week's directive, jointly issued by four departments, bans them from playing the game during office hours and study, training and inspection periods, and at places of work. They are also forbidden from winning or losing money and other items in public areas. They are not allowed to gamble with the recipients of public services. Finally, the ruling says the city's public servants cannot gamble overseas.

Violating the new directive will result in public condemnation and demotion, which could also include being removed from the Communist Party of China. A reward system has also been set up and those who inform the authorities of such gambling activities could be eligible to receive 50 percent of all bets seized.

Banning civil servants from gambling is not new in China. In the past couple of years the cities of Hanzhong in Shaanxi Province, in the nation's northwest, and Chenzhou in the southern province of Hunan, for instance, have issued similar prohibitions. State and Party directives, such as the Provisional Regulation of State Civil Servants, which was issued by the State Council in 1993, also say it is forbidden for civil servants and Party members to gamble and that all violations will be punished.

Encouraging citizens to report the gambling activities of public servants has also been widely adopted, but few reward systems are as gen-

erous as Shenzhen's. Yet despite the rewards on offer and the threats hanging over the heads of public servants who like to gamble, will the regulation actually have an impact? What are the potential problems of the regulation and what modifications should be made?

Here are several different perspectives.

Cui Xiaohui, a staff member at the Research Bureau of the Beijing Municipal Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference: **It is window dressing without looking at the causes.**

In the short term, the regulation may have an impact. But in the long run, it won't resolve the fundamental problems facing the nation's public service sector. Improving the system and the standards of the nation's civil servants requires systematical and judicial measures.

Generally speaking, there are two approaches to managing civil servants: administration procedures and personal management. The former includes the selection, recruitment, promotion and retirement procedures, while the latter covers the management of one's values, attitudes, professionalism and interests.

The new regulation doesn't really address these issues. It's too specific and therefore has lots of holes and limitations. Regulating civil servants is a much bigger issue that involves the entire system, and achieving significant outcomes will take a long time.

Cheng Xixu, a University of Foreign Studies graduate: **It could backfire.**

All citizens should feel compelled to

report the gambling activities of public servants. They should not be motivated by the thought of a reward. I personally hate gambling and the idea of getting money for revealing such instances doesn't sit well with me.

I therefore think that a reward policy may actually prevent some people from informing the authorities as it's not very honorable when others come to know that you've received money for such an act. In addition, what if the whistleblower was one of those involved in the gambling? It's possible that some people may do in others to make a few quick bucks, which they could then use at a later date at another game. If so, the policy won't really be beneficial to society.

Su Zhengping, self employed: **There needs to be more than words.**

Such a generous reward system will certainly encourage people to reveal any wrongdoing, but whether or not the regulation is effective depends on how firmly the government backs it up with action. There have been cases where governments have issued harshly worded regulations but they haven't been strictly enforced.

There are also some practical issues that need to be addressed, such protecting the identity of an informant and finding the best way to pay the rewards.

Song Shisheng, a Beijing civil servant: **The wording needs clarification.**

Such a generous system for rewarding informants is rarely seen, which demonstrates the strength of this move. But the wording regarding the reward system is not that rigorous and could be misleading. Half of the stake money shouldn't go directly to the informant or informants. The

money ought to be seized at the site and submitted to the authorities. After that, it should be up to all related departments involved to come up with a figure, which could be as much as 50 percent.

Sun Jindong, a political/media critic: **The reward should be capped.**

It would be better to set an upper limit for the reward. I looked at regulations concerning reporting crimes on chinacourt.org and discovered that there were upper limits for most informants. Most of these people are not looking to get rich from the wrongdoing of others, so offering a reward of thousands or perhaps even millions of dollars would seriously deviate from the tenet of the reward system. (Originally appeared on <http://www.rednet.com.cn>, Saturday)

Leng Chuancai, a staff member at the Beijing Institute of Architectural Management's human resources department: **Gambling or entertainment?**

The regulation seems to focus on playing mah-jong and any other gambling activities during office hours, but rarely would civil servants play such games while working. They all know the gravity of such irresponsible behavior.

However, the problem is more serious after work, in terms of gambling itself, and I think that's where the focus needs to be. Playing mah-jong after work for money is gambling, but it could also be interpreted as entertainment. If the amount of money involved is minimal, it's not exactly gambling. Police should be given discretion to decide whether people are involved in gambling or an entertainment activity.

By Dong Nan

The Internet phenomenon has well and truly reached China — and it is something teenagers have embraced. But that is not necessarily a good thing.

Various media outlets have focused on the negative impacts of web pages that carry violence, pornography or online games, and the harm they can cause to users and their families.

A survey by the Beijing Women's Federation in August, focusing on the parents of teenagers, found the majority of respondents did not think favorably about their children's Internet surfing habits. However, many of them were not able to offer ideas about reducing the impact of the Internet on the family unit. And others admitted to having a poor understanding of the Internet.

"Most parents of teenagers were born in the 1950s and 1960s, and many of them feel they are unable to deal with new things such as the Internet. They want to restrict their children's use of the Internet, but could not find proper ways to guide them," a report accompanying the survey result reads.

The survey involved 1,500 parents in the five Beijing districts of Xicheng, Chongwen, Haidian, Changping and Tongzhou.

Internet under attack

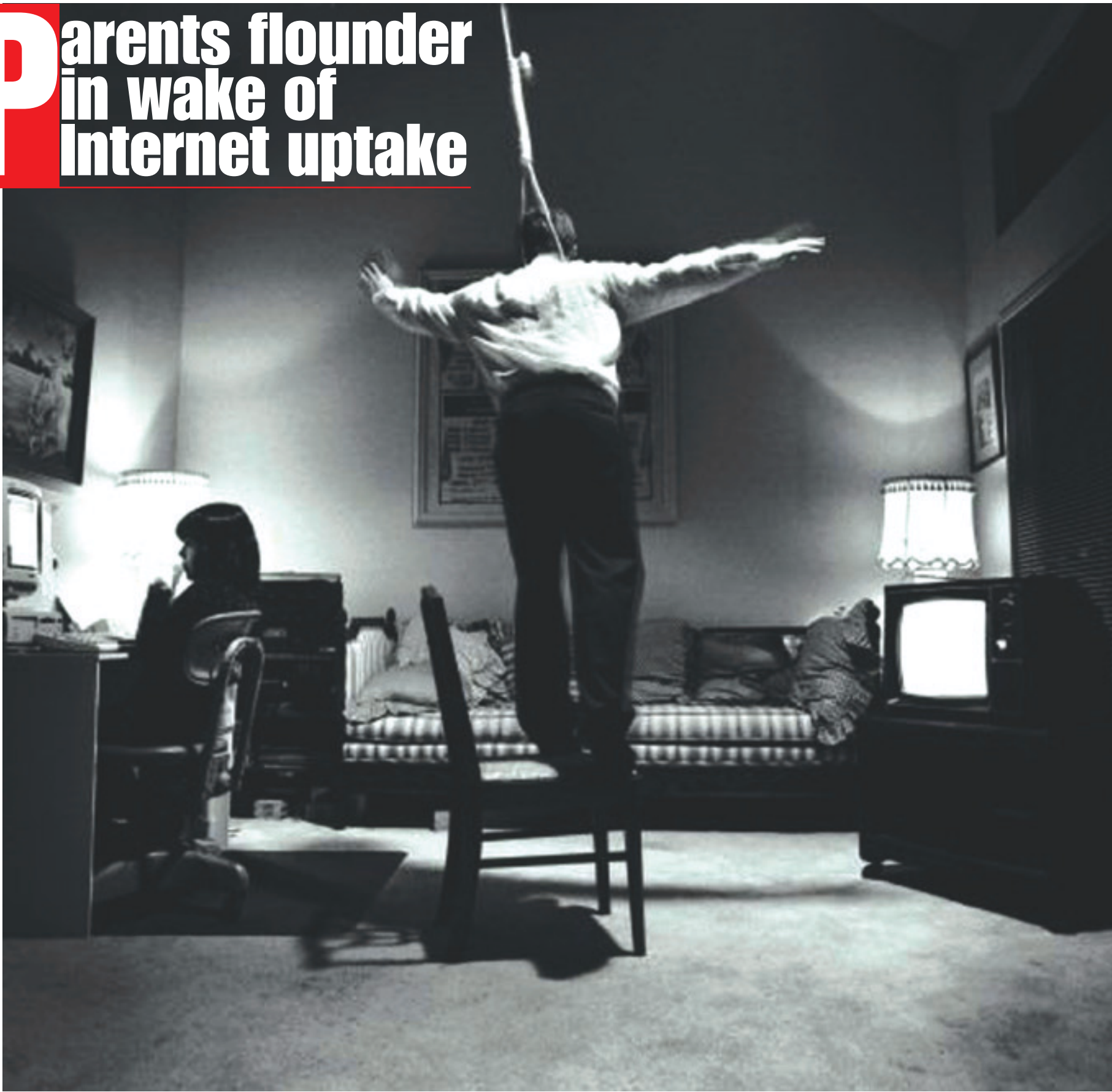
About 63% of respondents said their children would surf the Internet frequently. However, only about 8% of them said they completely supported their children's online habits. The majority, almost 66%, said teenagers should only use the Internet occasionally and that their parents should supervise them.

Although many parents agreed that the Internet allowed teenagers to gain information, study, learn about high-tech information, be entertained and relax, and communicate with others, only 11% said those advantages outweighed the disadvantages. About 22% believed the disadvantages overshadowed the advantages, and more than 4% thought the "Internet only does harm to teenagers," while almost 52% said the impact depended on how well their parents and teachers had guided them. Online gaming and chatting, and being able to access pornographic images were among the drawbacks of the Internet, the respondents said.

"It is really dangerous for teenagers to be on the Internet," Zhou, the father of a primary school student, who would not reveal his full name, told *Beijing Today*. "I am not concerned that my son would purposely look at pornographic images, but what happens if he inadvertently accesses them? Even large-scale and renowned web outfits such as Sina, Sohu and Netease carry pornographic references on their pages. I'm afraid my son will get the wrong information about sex."

Zhao Zhi, the father of a 12-month-old girl, said: "Sometimes I find myself spending a lot of time playing online games. They are really addictive and it

Parents flounder in wake of Internet uptake



is hard to turn them off. Much of my money and time has been wasted playing games on the Internet. When my daughter grows up, I will not let her use the Internet freely, and I'll attempt to keep her away from such games."

In April, *Beijing Today* revealed a spate of crimes that occurred during online meetings in chat rooms. On April 4, police in Anhui Province rescued an 18-year-old middle school student from a local brothel. She had been taken there a fortnight earlier by a person who called himself "Handsome Man" on the Internet. According to the man, he "met" Cheng in a chat room and saw her in person on March 20.

Together with an accomplice, he forced the teenager to take sleeping pills, stripped her naked and took photos, and then raped her. After that, they took the her to a brothel where she

was forced into prostitution.

"Teenagers can be easily influenced as they have very few social experiences," said Zhang Xuemei, one of the Beijing Law Aid and Research Center for Children's top officials. "In addition, many of them do not know how to protect their privacy when using the Internet and freely hand out personal information to strangers, such as their real names, telephone numbers, schools and addresses. All of this makes it easier for them to be targeted by predators. And then there is the issue of pornography and other questionable pages on the Internet, which also come into play here."

That may explain why almost 49% of respondents thought the age of 18 was the best time for teenagers to start using the Internet. More than 20% of parents said they should be junior middle

school students — who are aged from 13 to 15 — before getting online, while a similar number said any teenager should be able to use the Internet. About 2% said they would be happy for their children to use the Internet as long as they were already in primary school, meaning they would be aged from seven to 13.

Little ability for control

As previously mentioned, the majority of parents believe the negative impacts of the Internet would be improved if they went online with their children. However, is this actually achievable? According to the survey, almost 80% of the families of respondents have computers. And most parents said they were mainly used as learning tools and for work. However, about 40% of respondents said they had never surfed online and about 10% said they had only started learning about the Internet in the previ-

ous six months.

Among those who had been online, about 34% said they only logged on once or twice a week. A similar percentage only used the Internet during the holidays and 15% logged on two or three times per week. Almost 18% of parents used the Internet everyday and about 46% of them did not know what kind of software their children were using to chat with online, such as QQ, MSN and ICQ.

About 30% were aware of QQ and less than 4% know of MSN.

"I use the Internet in my office, but it's for work only. The only thing I use it for is to receive emails," said Liu Hongfei, who is in her 40s. "It would be too hard for me to learn such complicated things as chatting online or speaking in forums. The only person who uses the computer and Internet at home is my son. My husband and I are so tired after a day's work and all of the housework that we aren't up for much more than watching TV."

Liu's son, a junior middle school student who is aged 14, has his own room, where the computer is located. The way for Liu and her husband to prevent their son from surfing the Internet for too long is to control the electricity to the computer. And the only method they had to prevent him from looking at questionable websites was to peep through the door to see what he was up to.

"I think he often downloads music and looks at pages related to computer games, but he does not play online games. And he sometimes chats using QQ — but not very often," said Liu. "I hear there is software that can stop people from looking at such sites, but neither I nor my husband know how to deal with that."

She adds: "I have tried to go online with my son, not only because I wanted to know what he was up to, but also because I really wanted to communicate with him. I tried to ask him to teach me how to use QQ but he complained, saying I was too slow."

In the survey, less than one-third of parents said their chil-

dren were willing to use the Internet with them.

Only 32% of the people involved in the survey said they were good at guiding their children when using the Internet. About 48% said it was "difficult" to direct them, while 10% found it "very difficult" and 9% "don't know how to do it" at all.

Teenagers' perspectives

"I really appreciated that my parents had an open mind and allowed me to start using the Internet at the same time they became aware of it, which was about four years ago," said Juliet Yu, a freshmen at a Beijing college.

"Of course it helped me to learn a lot, which was useful at school, but what I do most is talk with other people in forums and chat rooms. I have many cyber friends, most of whom are kind hearted and willing to help me with my problems. They have a variety of backgrounds, which helps me to learn things that I couldn't find out about in school. And when I had a terrible college entrance examination in July, their advice and encouragement helped me a lot.

"Most forums I go to are about comic books and literature, and I sometimes post my pictures and short novels there. But of course they are childish and I would feel embarrassed if my parents saw them. Fortunately though, they trust me and never try to look at what I'm doing on the Internet. I think if parents have educated their children well and their children have self-control and self-respect, there is no need for them to be afraid of the Internet."

Guo Xinyu, a senior middle school student, says: "I don't think it's a good idea for parents to go online with their children. I have a good relationship with my parents and sometimes I tell them something funny that I've seen on the Internet, but if they wanted to surf with me I would think it unnatural and strange. I think middle school students already have the ability to control themselves and should be able to surf on the Internet alone."

How Did You Spend the Mid-autumn Festival and National Day Holiday?

By Dong Nan

The Mid-autumn Festival is over for another year, as is the week-long National Day holiday, meaning hundreds of millions of people are heading back to work today. Chinese people spent the special times in various ways and the China Social Survey Information Community decided to find out how.

A survey was conducted involving 2,000 people in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Chongqing, Shenyang, Harbin, Wuhan, Xi'an and Zhengzhou.

Mid-autumn Festival at home

Since there is no actual holiday for the day of the traditional Mid-autumn Festival, which fell on Tuesday, September 28 this year, most people had to work. But once it was time to go back home,

about 68% of respondents chose to enjoy a dinner celebration — particularly those who were married and above 25 years of age. Only 23% opted for a night out on the town with friends.

"To be frank, the Mid-autumn Festival is not as attractive to me as Christmas, said 23-year-old Zhu Ying, "and I did not arrange anything special. My mother asked me to come to home for dinner so we could spend the evening together, which was fine, so I did."

About 72% of the people involved in the survey visited relatives and friends on the weekend before the festival, while 53% visited their colleagues. About 91% of them brought moon cakes as gifts.

Almost 90% of respondents agreed that there should be a

one-day holiday to mark the festival as it would be more convenient for people to arrange activities, which would also help to better preserve the traditional cultural event.

National Day holiday for travel

About 53% of the people surveyed chose to travel during the October 1 — 7 holiday. Another 41% did not hit the road, but arranged to meet friends or enjoy outings.

A further 6% said they did nothing but stay at home and rest. Among those who traveled, 32% went abroad.

"I left Beijing last Thursday to go to Hangzhou and came back today," Wang Dongmei, an employee of a foreign fund company in Beijing said on Wednesday. "I will do a bit of housework tomorrow and

then after my time away I will be able to return to work refreshed."

What are the concerns?

The biggest concerns for 76% of respondents were the problems of buying tickets to travel.

"So many people go places when there is a holiday," Wang said. "And tickets for both trains and planes are always hard to get."

About 57% of those surveyed said they were worried for their personal wellbeing during National Day break, as there are always so many people moving around the nation.

The potentially fatal SARS disease cast a cloud over the National Day holiday last year, but only 2% of respondents showed apprehension over the possible reappearance of the virus.

By Zhaoxi Liu

Jiang Yunchun from Xi'an in Shaanxi Province planned to spend the recent Mid-autumn Festival with his 87-year-old mother. But he never made it after going to the city of Lanzhou a few days before the festival, to collect a debt.

Jiang was shot dead by police on September 26 in a yard outside a building in the capital of Gansu Province, in the nation's northwest. Zhang Fenglin, from whom Jiang had come to pick up the money, lived in the building.

The deadly moment

Early on the morning of September 26, Zhang's wife saw Jiang — who has an orthopedic left leg — come into her home to speak with her husband. Some time later, she entered the room where the two men were talking, only to be greeted by an unusual facial expression from her husband, *Xi Bu Shang Bao*, a Lanzhou newspaper, reported the following day.

Zhang asked his wife to go and get the money. And at the same time he scribbled down a note, which said: "Explosives strapped to his body, call police immediately." She left home after agreeing to get the cash. A few steps later she realized that her husband could be right and Jiang could have been carrying explosives, as he looked to have something around his stomach, under his clothes. It prompted her to call police, *Xi Bu Shang Bao* reported, who arrived soon after.

They surrounded the building, evacuated nearby residents, and asked gas companies and the power department to cut their supplies to the area. By early afternoon three snipers were in place, and they all waited for Zhang's wife to return. She came into view around 3:50 pm. She was carrying 30,000 yuan, which police had given to her, and was accompanied by a plain-clothes policeman, *Xi Bu Shang Bao* said.

Almost 30 minutes after the pair went into the building, Jiang appeared. Police shouted at Jiang as he walked away from the building, telling him to stop. He turned around but did not stop. Two warning shots were fired — but he continued to walk. Then two more shots rung out and Jiang fell to the ground. In the nearly two hours that followed, bomb demolition experts worked around his body.

Jiang was born in May, 1940 and had been living in Xi'an for more than a decade. He was a military veteran who was injured during his seven years in the army. After being discharged from the military, he made a living by compiling and selling reference material, the Xi'an-based *Chinese Business View* reported.

Bag of mystery

Li Fenlian, Jiang's wife, along with her son from a previous marriage, arrived in Lanzhou two days after the shooting and went to the Lanzhou Bureau of Public Security immediately.

Later that same day, the Xi'an-based *Sanqin Daily* was told by Pan Xiaoyu, who is Li's oldest son, an officer at the bureau surnamed Chen allegedly admitted that there was a water bag around Jiang's waist.

"I bought the water bag for him," Li Fenlian told a *Sanqin Daily* reporter. She said her deceased husband used the bag as a cushion or filled it with hot water to warm his stomach.

Police have not said if they found explosives on Jiang's body, the September 30 edition of *Chinese Business View* reported. But other papers claimed Jiang had threatened to detonate explosives while in Zhang's home, which has been refuted by his family.

Jiang was hard of hearing, Li claimed, which could explain why he did not stop walking. "He died unjustly," she was quoted by *Sanqin Daily* as saying.

A deadly mistake?

Debate about whether or not police acted properly quickly surfaced after media outlets in both Lanzhou and Xi'an covered the killing.

Man Shot by Police on Suspicion of Carrying Explosives:



A bomb demolition expert inspects the deceased.

Right Call, Overreaction or Blatant Error?



Jiang turned around but did not stop when called on by police.

Police shouted at Jiang as he walked away from the building, telling him to stop. He turned around but did not stop. Two warning shots were fired — but he continued to walk. Then two more shots rung out and Jiang fell to the ground.

Officers move into the area where the shooting took place.

Photos by Jiang Shenglian

Shi Wenyan, a retired teacher from the Northwest Institute of Law, told *Chinese Business View* that he could not understand the actions of police. He said the police officers were wrong to lethal force as Jiang had already left the building and the situation was being contained. Gong Xiaoya, a Shaanxi policeman, wrote to the paper, saying his Lanzhou colleagues had overreacted.

An article in the September 29 issue of *Mirror*, a newspa-

per in Beijing focusing on legal issues, stressed the differences between the extreme actions of defending one's rights and the concept of terrorism.

The author argued that if Jiang had actually threatened to harm Zhang or others to ensure the return of the money, he was merely taking extreme action to defend his right of credit. However, he said police were over the top as they treated Jiang like a terrorist.

It was also pointed out by the

deceased's family and the media that police did not attempt to negotiate with Jiang to avoid the incident. They did not contact him during the more than eight hours that he spent inside Zhang's home, the *Chinese Business View* claimed.

However, Lanzhou police have stood firm, saying the action was appropriate.

The spokesman for the Lanzhou Bureau of Public Security, Cao Jun, told *Chinese Business View* that it was reasonable for the commander at the scene to order the snipers to fire. There were busy streets nearby and the results of an explosion would have been unthinkable.

A staff member at a legislative institution in Beijing, who declined to reveal his name, told *Beijing Today* that several issues surrounding Jiang's death had to be clarified, such as the actual purpose of the water bag when he went to see Zhang and if the deceased was hard of hearing. If police did make a mistake, Jiang's family would be entitled to compensation, he said.

Family seeks justice

Jiang's family said his death was an injustice. After arriving in Lanzhou, they tried to get the Procuratorate of Gansu Province to review the incident, but were allegedly told the procuratorate "can't take care of it." Their request for a copy of the official police report into the incident has also been refused, *Sanqin Daily* reported last Friday.

Accordingly, the family has refused a police suggestion to cremate the body, the newspaper said. "My husband's body definitely cannot be cremated. It is evidence," Li said. She told the newspaper that her family is determined to ensure justice is done.

No further information about the matter is available, despite *Beijing Today* contacting the Lanzhou Bureau of Public Security and the Procuratorate of Gansu Province. Clerks who spoke to *Beijing Today* yesterday said no one could comment as all senior staff were on National Day holidays.



Liu Huan, 33, discusses the fallout from a May 9 accident that claimed the life of a farmer.

Photos by Ma Sen

Driver Ordered to Pay Up after Killing Wayward Pedestrian

By Wang Xiaoxiao

A Beijing driver has to pay 156,900 yuan in compensation for the death of a farmer who was hit while illegally crossing the second ring road in early May, the Beijing Xuanwu District People's Court ruled last Wednesday.

Liu Huan has become the first person in Beijing to be forced to pay compensation under the nation's newest traffic law, which came into effect at the start of May. He was found guilty of failing to do all he could to avoid the pedestrian and ensure her safety.

"I never expected I would have to pay such a large compensation bill for the woman who has turned my life into a mess," Liu, aged 33, told *Beijing Today* after leaving the court. "It was all at her fault and now I'm supposed to pay for her stupid, irresponsible behavior — it's not fair." He will appeal the decision to a higher court, the Beijing No. 1 Intermediate People's Court.

Crossing was illegal

On the evening May 9, Liu was heading home after visiting friends.

"I was driving on the main artery of the second ring road, where all pedestrians are strictly forbidden," he said, "and suddenly, when I was about to get on the Caihuaying Bridge (in the city's south), I saw her walking straight, trying to cross the road. I began flashing my headlights, beeped my horn and eased on the brakes, thinking most people would see me and run a little bit to get to the other side quicker. But unfortunately, she . . . kept walking. Then I hit the brakes hard, but it was too late."

Wu Junfa, the husband of Cao Zhixiu, who was 30, said they did not know of any other spot where they could cross the road, so they had to risk their lives each time they wanted to go somewhere.

Who's to blame?

According to the new law, drivers will be held responsible for accidents with pedestrians or non-motor vehicles. However, if there is evidence that traffic laws were broken by the pedestrian or non-motor vehicle, and that the driver had taken all reasonable measures to avoid an accident, their accountability diminishes.

The Xuanwu Branch of the Traffic Management Bureau of the Beijing Municipal Bureau of Public Security decided Liu and Cao should shoulder equal responsibility for the accident after a routine examination showed the brakes on Liu's car were substandard and that he did not do all he could to avoid the collision.

However, Liu still disagrees. "They looked at my car after a fierce collision and hard braking to avoid her. How could they say my car had problems braking before the collision? Besides, what does reasonable measures mean? I did what any experienced driver would do."

Since the accident, Liu has lost his job. He told *Beijing Today*: "I wasn't able to con-

centrate on my work after the collision, so I was fired. Who's going to compensate me? She's not the only victim in this accident."

A woman who would only give her surname as Wang and who was in the courtroom when Liu was ordered to pay compensation, said the government has to educate people about the new law. Choosing bad locations for pedestrian passes encourages people to cross roads illegally, she added.

A sound law?

In November, National People's Congress Standing Committee member Jiang Ying was quoted by *Beijing Youth Daily* as saying the law shows that legislators care about the lives of pedestrians.

And at the end of last month, *China Daily* quoted Duan Liren, one of the law's drafters, as saying: "This is a landmark that aims to reduce the number of traffic accidents in China, while changing people's attitudes towards traffic safety. Is it fair that a pedestrian loses their life perhaps after just one bad decision and then their family doesn't get any compensation?" He said the law placed priority on a pedestrian's right to life over a driver's right of way.

But Liu says the lives of all people involved are at stake. "Stopping your car suddenly could also endanger the life of the person driving. The car might go out of control and anything could happen. If I had to go onto the shoulder of the road and I damaged my car or was somehow killed, would I have been compensated by her?"

Zhao Wei, a traffic policeman, says there have been several cases of motorists being killed after attempting to avoid pedestrians when they were crossing roads illegally. However, they were never compensated.

Taxi driver Feng Yan has expressed his concern about the law. "Only when pedestrians are deliberately trying to create an accident or want to commit suicide can drivers be deemed not responsible — but it is almost impossible to prove that a person was deliberately trying to create a traffic accident. So it means that the drivers lose out even if they're not at fault. It's not fair. Where are our legal rights to be driving on the roads?"

More has to be done

In addition to highlighting the new law, Cao's death shows more has to be done to improve the crossing options along Beijing's many roads.

"I've found that the pedestrian bridges and underpasses are not as convenient as they are in my country, as I sometimes have to walk hundreds of meters just to cross a road that might be 20 meters wide," a German student told *Beijing Today*.

"It's inconvenient for a pedestrian to spend 10 minutes every time they want to cross a road. Also, the signs (indicating where to cross) are not that clear. Without clear and understandable signs, pedestrians will be in trouble and that needs to be solved by better city planning."



"They don't have to envy me. You've got to pay what you have to pay – and I've paid dearly."

Photo by Zhang Yan

By Hester Xu / Zhang Yan

A village on the banks of Lugu Lake, along the border of Yunnan and Sichuan provinces, is home to the Mosuo people, a branch of the Naxi ethnic group and the only remaining matriarchal society in China. Once a girl reaches the age of 15, she becomes known as an "axia" and is given a special home that allows a "walking marriage." The woman's lover visits her at night and leaves early the next day. She can close the door of her home to the man if she wants to stop the relationship. And in a typical Mosuo family, a mother raises the children. Except for her blood relatives, men have no real status within the family – most children do not even know who their fathers are.

The most well known person among the Mosuo, both in her village and throughout China, is Yang'erche Namu, who is the only female to have left the area in more than half a century. Namu's real-life fairytale began when she went to study at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music in her teens, before heading to Beijing for work. She fell in love with a Norwegian diplomat while in the capital and eventually moved with him to Switzerland in 1997.

But sadly for Namu, the enchanting story could not last forever. About two years ago, Namu's relationship with her "Prince Charming" ended and she was swindled out of money that was earmarked for a museum near her home. Yet in spite of the problems, she has shown determination to get on with her life and flourished. Namu, now approaching her mid-30s, has rebounded from her troubled recent past to write three more books and become somewhat of a celebrity, among other achievements. Thinking of herself as extraordinary, Namu simply smiles at the hand fate dealt her.

Losing a faraway home forever

Namu often returned to her village during the relationship with her prince. And while enjoying a three-month stay in 2002, she decided to build a home for herself and her sweetheart. She made a bundle of cash for doing a TV ad in Shenzhen and once the shoot was completed, she set out for her village. Getting off the plane, she had to hike about seven hours along a mountain trail. She was dressed like a student for fear that someone would target her and perhaps attempt to mug her. Namu could not wait to reveal her dream about building a house to her family, but all immediately told her she was out of her mind. Yet Namu had a one-line answer,

"princes used to build palaces for their princesses, but I want to be the princess who builds a palace for her prince."

After paying a hefty price for an ideal plot of land, an apple orchard, Namu signed up more than 30 workers to help build the home. She told her prince nothing about the home, simply saying she was "doing something" near Lugu Lake. She toiled with the workers with one desire in her heart – to complete the house as quickly as possible so she could bring him to her village. Together, they would sit at the front of the residence and enjoy life.

Working towards her dream,

Namu never imagined she was losing her love or the home they had built together in Switzerland. The trip home was extended to six months and it came at a time when her prince had fallen ill. With no one to take care of him and gripped by loneliness, he ended their seven-year relationship. Reflecting on their time together, Namu, says: "Seven years of love is as sweet and as fine as the best Swiss chocolate." Despite her courage, Namu was most hurt by the fact that her prince could not wait for her for another few months. She asked herself: "Why couldn't he wait? If only he had waited for another three months, we would have enjoyed the beautiful

The Yuppie 'Gem Fairy' and Her Lost 'Prince'

Up until 9 am each day, Namu would immerse herself in romantic memories about her prince for *The Seven Year Itch*. During the following hour she worked on *Dim Fragrance*, revealing to the world the charm and history of the Chinese bellyband – the *dudou*. She compared the band, a piece of cloth worn around the stomach, to a love letter from a Chinese woman. A steaming soup was consumed around 11 am and then writing started on *Come Back Soon*, which is a guide to etiquette.



"Seven years of love is as sweet and as fine as the best Swiss chocolate."

scenery of Lugu Lake together."

Reflecting on the passionate relationship, Namu says her lack of general communication skills played a part in its demise. "Perhaps I didn't know how to communicate with him properly. If I had told him before (about the home under construction), it might have been different." She cites the difficulties facing Mosuo women. Her mother, for example, had to work hard to support a big family. Except for meal and bed times, she had little chance to express affection for, communicate with or try to understand her children. And Namu admits that since she was brought up in an environment of walking marriages, she never really grasped the meanings and concepts of relationships and marriage. Then, as if to comfort herself, she adds: "He didn't deserve me anyway. Men can often be mean, (whereas) women are more tolerable."

Fate strikes again

Striving to make a contribution to her people pulled Namu out of the shadow of failed love. Believing that there are two kinds of wealthy people in the world – ones with money and others rich in spirit and mind, she returned to her village last year. Namu was inspired by a peninsula along the lake and decided it would be an ideal place to erect a museum for the Mosuo. She started the project immediately, determined to leave a mark for her people.

Namu gave most of her savings to a designer friend who she entrusted to complete the museum project. Her remaining 200,000 yuan was donated for the construction of a school in

Shangri-la, in the Tibetan area of Yunnan. When she came back to Beijing, Namu only had about 5,000 yuan in her pocket. "I'm not good at math and I don't expect to earn a lot of money, but I can always commit a limited amount to something meaningful," she says. But another crisis was emerging.

The construction of the museum came to a halt when Namu's "friend" fled with the money, leaving workers without pay. During the Spring Festival, carrying a bag full of money



that had come from her book royalties, Namu went from house to house paying the workers. Although she felt dismal due to the actions of the designer, Namu went against friends' advice to sue him. Being a pious follower of Buddhism, all was more or less forgiven. And besides, she already had too many other things to deal with. One of them was to earn more money so the construction of the Mosuo Cultural Museum could be completed, so artists from around the world could come to China and Lugu Lake.

Finding herself

Beijing has always had a special spot in Namu's heart, as

she considers it a lucky place. Whenever feeling exhausted – either physically or spiritually, she heads back to the capital to unwind and rejuvenate herself for the next challenge.

Namu, a prolific author, owns a home in the city where she wrote her three latest books. She penned them at the same time during a two-month period last year. *The Seven Year Itch* is already on the shelves and is due to be followed soon by *Dim Fragrance* and *Come Back Soon*. Namu was filled by a sense of loneliness when waking with drowsy eyes at 6 am to write her books. But all of that subsided after seeing the bright flowers in her room, getting up and praying before Buddha for peace, and downing a strong cup of coffee.

Up until 9 am each day, Namu would immerse herself in romantic memories about her prince for *The Seven Year Itch*. During the following hour she worked on *Dim Fragrance*, revealing to the world the charm and history of the Chinese bellyband – the *dudou*. She compared the band, a piece of cloth worn around the stomach, to a love letter from a Chinese woman. A steaming soup was consumed around 11 am and then writing started on *Come Back Soon*, which is a guide to etiquette.

For the last two years, Namu's busy life has been rich and varied. She now hosts her own radio show and writes a column for a fashion magazine, in addition to making speeches and socializing with celebrities and political figures from around the globe. She does all of it just so others can learn more about her people and to make a place for them in the world. Namu likes to describe herself as a "rubber wheel," as someone who enjoys absorbing pressure and then bouncing back.

A Mosuo yuppie in Beijing

Generous and fast-talking, Namu claims to be "the only Mosuo yuppie in Beijing," fully enjoying the pleasure of being a celebrity. Speaking frankly, she adds: "The good part of being a celebrity is that I don't have to pay for skincare products, getting my hair done or going to the gym." Having mingled with people from high society and lived life at the lowest ebb, Namu regards most things as short-lived – except for high-heel shoes. She says she would pay any price to buy the shoes she wants. And her fondness for them keeps Namu out of nightclubs for fear of damaging them. "Other people will not see the things that all happens with such ease, but it's been a tough life. They don't have to envy me. You've got to pay what you have to pay – and I've paid dearly."

One of the downsides of standing out occurred in a taxi one night while wearing a black dress with a low-cut neckline. Realizing the driver was stealing glances at her Namu simply got out and walked down an alley. She emerged from the alley after a quick alteration, with another white dress under her black dress, showing how easy it is for the "ever changing lady" to adjust herself.

Her name, roughly translated from Tibetan to English, means "Gem Fairy." Just like her beautiful name, she is profound, pure and dazzling, yet simple. For people from a more modern Chinese society, Namu is shrouded in mystery. And hoping to change her destiny, Namu tries to live everyday as if it were her last. "I have no bad intentions, I'm simple, stubborn and good-hearted."

Right Place, Wong Time



Chinese Contemporary Art Gallery Opens in Beijing



Photos by Tian Xiaotong

By Gareth George

Autumn is not normally a time for budding foliage, but here normal rules do not apply. Beijing's newly bloomed Contemporary Art Gallery symbolizes a rebirth of sorts for Dashanzi: after months of uncertainty about the owners' plans for the site, new contracts have just been signed that grant the whole artistic community at Factory 798 a greater security, at a little more expense.

Appropriately for a new baby, well wishers are out in force, spilling out of the gallery and onto the dirt road alongside. Trembling with activity, the red metal steps are garnished with the white filter tips of foreign Marlboro Lights. The interior is airy – loft like, but not cramped. The manager, Jenny Wong, poses for photographs among a gaggle of onlookers, like a fashion waif. Born and raised in the Netherlands, her mother is from Singapore, and her father from Hong Kong. "The Netherlands is a small country, so we learn a lot of languages," Wong speaks English, German, French, Cantonese and Mandarin as well as her native Dutch, making her uniquely suited to dealing with the gallery's anticipated international clientele.

The Beijing Contemporary Art Gallery has a big brother – the Chinese Contemporary Art Gallery in London. The London gallery was opened to raise awareness of cutting edge Chinese art in the West. "The London gallery anticipates a development in cultural tourism. People from the West can now move East," said Wong, "They can come to see the ancient culture, the Great Wall, or whatever, and now they can see the latest Chinese art in China. Also, they have the chance to possibly meet the artists, and there are still many artists here who cannot travel to exhibit yet. The first place to see them is right here."

When it came to a location, Dashanzi was the only choice. For a start it forms the heart of Beijing's artistic community, with many top local artists living and exhibiting in the area. The gallery owners chose the site for the same reasons the artists flocked here initially. Wong explains, "The East German Bauhaus style factory spaces were built in the 1950s. They provide large, open spaces which can easily be divided into smaller spaces. As well as this, all the ceiling windows face north. This natural light casts no shad-



Jenny Wong

ows – perfect for crafting tools in the 50s and now, perfect for producing art."

Wong is careful not to imply that the gallery is purely for the Western palette. "The gallery is interested in great art first. We won't choose artists because their subject matter might be easy to relate to for the Western audience, or because of any political or social message the artist may be trying to convey. We have no agenda. The work is chosen simply according to the quality, uniqueness and innovation – no gimmicks or cheap stunts to raise publicity."

The first exhibition fills the space without crowding it. The place is divided by the work itself, not so much dazzling the spectators, as inviting them to step around. The room is dominated by a large pool with floating plexiglass flowers. Each flower contains a handmade *siheyuan*, or courtyard house: an immediate and simply stated comment on Beijing today, with the floating flowers reminiscent of those used to commemorate the dead. "The artists for the first exhibition were chosen because they have some connection with the London gallery, or the pieces are particularly unique. For instance, the black and white print of Shanghai uses a technique like camera obscura – you couldn't reprint it, it's a one off."

Jenny Wong first met many of the artists who will exhibit at the gallery in her native Holland. "I saw something in their work I hadn't seen before. I was amazed that here were artists I had never heard of who were from so far away, and yet were producing

work of such obvious quality."

All the exhibits for the opening were chosen by the directors of the London Gallery, Ludovic Bois, Julia Colman and Kent A. Logan but Wong was the perfect facilitator, as a friend to the artists – especially because of her European background and her residence in Beijing. All the pieces chosen for the first exhibition are new. "This show is like nothing else you'll see right now," adds Wong, "this is the birth of the gallery and the freshness of the pieces reflects that."

Continuing the theme of birth is the work selected from Zhu Ming, a performance artist who uses a plastic bubble in his performances. The gallery features a series of nightmarish black photographs of Zhu Ming in his bubble covered in fluorescent green paint (which looks toxic, even if it isn't). Unusual images such as these, sitting beside more "conventional" painting and sculpture is refreshing. Although in recent years Chinese contemporary art has to some extent been dominated by painters, the gallery has been careful to reflect all facets of today's art in China.

Zhang Dali, who exhibits a series of naked figures suspended from the ceiling, was one of the artists Wong first met in Holland. She says she has enjoyed watching how his work has developed and it was felt by all that this, his newest work, would interact well with the gallery space. "It encourages you to view the gallery from a different perspective, especially from the second floor."

Painting his native Chongqing, Zhao Bo's work is some of the most immediate at the gallery. His uncompromising use of color and sinister looking, warped figures suck the viewer in. "He has cooperated with the London Gallery before," says Wong "He's not that well known, but we chose him because he's popular with collectors and the public when they see his work. And as yet, he's not been shown by many other galleries."

Despite her obvious relief at how well the day has gone, Jenny Wong refuses to be overly optimistic about the future. "Today has been the cherry on the cake," she says, "but we just don't know what will happen tomorrow. We have new contracts, but the price of the rent and the land may yet rise. If this happens the community will have to move. I mean, it might become another SoHo, like New York in the late 70s, but we just don't know. We're enjoying it while it lasts."

Autumn in Red and Gold

By Qiu Lin

It has taken Jiang Guofang, one of the most successful Chinese artists of recent times, seven years to finish the preparations for his current exhibition at the Forbidden City.

For an artist whose paintings these days fetch as much as HK \$450,000 (*The Concubine and the Sparrows* at a Christie's auction in 2000), Jiang remains an extraordinarily humble man.

He explains, almost as if to apologize, "One of the reasons that the collection has taken me so long to complete is that each painting takes about six months to finish."

The Grand Banquet, the extraordinary centerpiece of the exhibition, is a 12-square-meter canvas showing 24 member of the Qing royal family and court, depicted "as the Emperor in my heart, because no model could match my idea of how the real Emperor must have been."

The exhibition, centering on the interior life of the Royal Court of the Qing Dynasty, at the Forbidden City's Shenwumen (Gate of Spiritual Valor), is the first private exhibition ever to be held in the museum. At the recent lavish opening, 200 guests were invited, but 600 turned up, because as Jiang puts it, "they were curious to see

what kind of exhibition could it possibly be that would be held in such an esteemed place."

Next year, the exhibition will travel to Rome and to Geneva, where it will be displayed at the headquarters of the United Nations.

A native Beijinger, Jiang says his paintings are a true reflection of the city he grew up in and loves. "Only a Beijinger, I believe, could get the heart and the essence of such an intimate aspect of Beijing history and life."

The exhibition finishes on October 20. The Forbidden City is open daily from 8:30 am till 5 pm. Admission is 60 yuan.

New Paintings by Jiang Guofang at the Forbidden City

Jiang Guofang's *The Grand Banquet*, 205x370cm

Midi Music Festival a Feast for Rock Fans



By Sabu

The Midi Music Festival made its long-awaited return last week, courtesy of the Beijing Midi School of Music, at the open square of the Beijing International Sculpture Park.

Music lovers from all over the country gathered to celebrate their very own music festival, with 45 bands playing rock, folk, blues, hip-hop and jazz during the four-day event. An audience of 40,000 attended the festival, which was postponed



from May this year.

Starting in 2000, the Midi festival has evolved into a large-scale outdoor music extravaganza, featuring both well-known old bands and newcomers. It has also become a traditional gathering of rock enthusiasts.

On each day of the festival, particular bands ignited the enthusiasm of the audience. The first day, it was punk band Bingjiling Gezi (Ice Cream Grid) that first got the crowd jumping, while Sound and Toy also won the audience over with a perfect performance featuring a new line-up.

On the second day, Wu Hongfei, lead singer of Happy Street, dressed in a red cheongsam, had the crowd in the palm of her hand with her bizarre but cute singing

style. Convenience Store and blues band Sand from Modern Sky gave arresting performances as usual.

The third day, Cold Fairyland gave the audience something a little different with their aesthetic style and use of instruments such as lute and cello. The entire audience were brought to their feet by Muma's sentimental and passionate music, while on the last day, every band received a rapturous welcome, including punk band Subs and Brain Failure, Hip-hop bands Kungfoo and

Dragon Gate, as well as Ak-47, Bonk from Norway, and the last band, Yaksa, marked the festival's high point.

The party was almost brought to a premature end on the second day, when head of Midi School Zhang Fan announced that festival faced cancelation due to complaints from nearby residents. However he managed to successfully negotiate a compromise with the district administration, putting performance times ahead three hours, and so, the show went on.



Revelations

Dance to Soul!

By Jacqueline Yu

It is rare to see a modern dance performance sell out in Beijing, but Alvin Alley American Dance Theatre's season at Poly Theatre last weekend did so, to the point where extra seats were being placed in the aisles right up until the show began.

Beijing Today was at the first day's show, Program A. It began with *Winter in Lisbon*, choreographed by Billy Wilson, to the music of Dizzy Gillespie. The audience were led into a nightclub bar full of rainbows of color, men dressed in shirts and trousers

and the women in sleeveless dresses, with jazz music rhythms and smoky atmospherics. Sexy group dance and pas de deux came in turn in the dance's four episodes: *Opening Theme*, *San Sabastian*, *Lisbon* and *Monteca*. You could feel the joy and sadness beneath, coaxing and teasing, yet maintaining a distance, psychological at least, between man and woman. It felt like a small, sentimental needle was quietly pricking your heart while watching the pleasure on stage.

After a fifteen minute intermission, Alonzo King's *Following the Subtle Current Upstream* brought

a different – more delicate, defined, and elegant dance in contrast to the first. Accompanied by the occasional roll of “thunder,” the dancers wore vibrant chartreuse, lime and yellow costumes, complete with techno tutus for the soloists. The title refers to spinal flow in yoga, and makes demands on the body that challenge even these superbly athletic dancers – the best examples of which was seen in the opening solos for three men, simmering with intensity in their precarious balances and torso-twisting combinations.

After another fifteen minute break came the finale, *Revelations*, a work created by Alvin Ailey in 1960, described as “presenting the blood memories of the African American experience.” After seeing it, it is clear why it is described as “a classic.” Danced to traditional African spiritual music, it seems to be about religious and spiritual reverence, conveying a feeling of transcending all earthly worries and cares. The audience, so far away from that history and culture, came to its collective feet, clapping and rocking its soul.

It would be hard to single out any individual dancers – the company is an ensemble of star dancers. The audience roared its approval at the end, and honored the company with a 10-minute ovation, very rare in China for a Western modern dance, which so often receive a lukewarm welcome at best.



Photo by Wang Xiaoli

Hairy Chests and Tutus

By Jacqueline Yu

“Freedom, passion and versatility,” was the predictable response when asked “What is the most important quality for a dancer to possess?” But Julie Kent, principal ballerina of the American Ballet Theatre added to the list, “... and a great sense of humor.” That's for fully certain when it comes to Les Ballets Trockadero De Monte Carlo, the New York based all-male-ballerina dance company.

Over-sized, muscly men in tutus and point shoes dancing a series of classical pieces, from *Swan Lake* and *Le Corsaire*, to Balanchine-style *Go For Barocco*, to *Paquita*, which few ballet companies in world would include in their repertoires in recent years – and they are not just making fun of ballerina's poses, their *en pointe* and *pas de bourree* are no joke, and full of power as well. While laughing over the absurdity of their movements, you are saying “Bravo!” for their astonishing technical ability.

For those who are deadly serious about ballet, Les Ballets Trockadero offers another, tongue-in-cheek, but never disrespectful perspective. And for those who fear they would sleep through any performance that involved people dancing on their toes and no dialogue, this may be the ballet troupe to change your mind.

WORLDWIDE

Elton John Blasts Madonna for Lip-Synching

British pop veteran Elton John took a foul-mouthed swipe at Madonna Monday, saying she cheated her fans by miming on stage.

While collecting a song-writing award from Q music magazine in London, John suddenly launched into a tirade against Madonna when he discovered she had been nominated for Best Live Act.

“Anyone who lip-synchs in public on stage when you pay 75 pounds (\$134) to see them should be shot,” John said in reference to ticket prices for Madonna's Reinvention tour.

His tirade prompted a swift response from Madonna's US spokeswoman Liz Rosenberg, who said in a statement: “Madonna does not lip-synch nor does she spend her time trashing other artists. (Reuters)

John Lennon's Killer Denied Parole

John Lennon's killer will remain in prison for at least two more years after being denied parole Tuesday because of the “extreme malicious intent” he showed in gunning down the former Beatle in 1980.

Mark David Chapman, 49, was notified of the decision late Tuesday after appearing before a three-member panel earlier in the day.

It was Chapman's third bid for freedom. He was denied parole in 2000 and again in 2002, on what would have been Lennon's 62nd birthday.

The latest denial “is based on the extreme malicious intent you exhibited (when) you fired a handgun multiple times, striking your victim – John Lennon,” the board wrote.

Chapman has been in prison more than 23 years for shooting Lennon outside his Manhattan apartment building as the musician returned from a recording session. (AP)

Bob Dylan opens up ... a little

Bob Dylan's much anticipated autobiography is hitting US bookstores, offering a rare, first-hand insight into the reclusive singer's life, the genesis of his career and struggle with celebrity.

However, any fan seeking a sensational tell-all confessional in the style of most rock music memoirs will be sorely disappointed.

Chronicles: Volume One wanders far from the normal autobiographical path, eschewing any chronological structure and providing instead snapshots of a life, filled with anecdotes about anyone from the boxer Joe Dempsey to U2 frontman Bono.

The non-indexed book is perhaps most notable for what it leaves out. The 293-page book is split into five chapters, three dealing with his early adult days in Minnesota and New York City, and two with the making of two of his lesser-known albums: *New Morning* (1970) and *Oh Mercy* (1989).

An audio version of the book is also being brought out, read by the actor Sean Penn. (AFP)

Law Pays \$18 Million to Ex

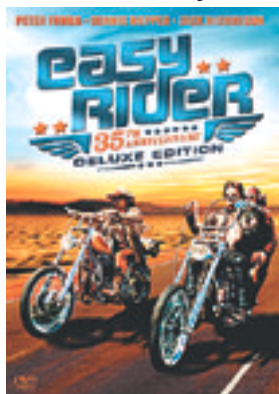
Hollywood heart-throb Jude Law has agreed to pay ex-wife Sadie Frost \$18 million after she threatened to go after half of everything he earns. The former couple, who divorced last year after nine years of marriage, are close to settling on a deal after months of bitter fighting. *The Sky Captain And The World Of Tomorrow* star will give his 37-year-old ex-wife the \$9 million London house they bought together, as well as pay for their three children's education, the costs of their nannies and their maintenance. Law will also pay Frost \$45,000 every month to maintain her lifestyle as well as an initial lump sum of \$5.4 million and half the proceeds from the sale of the London flat they also own. (IMDB)



Jude Law

What's on DVD

Easy Rider



Dennis Hopper and Peter Fonda star in this 1969 anti-establishment classic about two bikers who hit the road to “find America.” Hopper, Fonda and Terry Southern won an Oscar nomination for their screenplay, while the then unknown Jack Nicholson picked up a nomination for best supporting actor. The 35th Anniversary deluxe edition is digitally remastered. English with Chinese subtitles. DVD 9

Chihwaseon



Korean filmmaker Kwon-taek Im's *Chihwaseon* won the Golden Palm for best director at the 2002 Cannes Film Festival. It tells the story of 19th century painter Ohwon Jang Sang-Ub, unfolding in a dream-like manner that is itself reminiscent of the artist's works. Special features include over an hour of behind-the-scenes footage. Korean with Korean, English and Chinese subtitles. DVD 9

Purple Rain



As one film critic said, “It isn't much of a movie, but it's one hell of a show!” Prince plays a talented/sensitive/misunderstood musician with questionable dress sense ... Actually the story line is entirely irrelevant – if songs like *Let's Go Crazy*, *When Doves Cry* and, of course, *Purple Rain* do it for you, then you'll need the 20th Anniversary Special Edition DVD to complement your CD soundtrack. English with Chinese subtitles. DVD 5

Tapping Tourism Trends



Walk this way: In the near future, the domestic tourism industry is expected to have demand for nearly two million more tour guides, particularly for people with skills in English or other foreign languages. There is similar potential for tour and hotel management professionals in China's exploding travel market.

Photos by Photocom

By Xie Lixue

With the improvement of standards of living and expansion of the worldwide transportation network, increasing numbers of people have opportunities to widen their horizons and relax by traveling.

The National Day holiday week in particular is a time when many people choose to pack their bags and head to new destinations near and far, and their travels have become a major annual shot in the arm to China's economy. More than 89 million people hit the road in the first week of October last year, 13 percent more than in 2002, according to figures from the National Bureau of Statistics and the China National Tourism Administration.

The travel boom has also given rise to many interesting careers in the field. Not only is there high demand for quality tour guides, travel agency directors and hotel managers around China, but such jobs can offer attractive pay and work conditions and chances to check out interesting new places and people.

Areas of highest demand

Nearly six million people work in the travel services and hotel industries today, according to surveys conducted by the human resources and education department of the China National Tourism Administration, but that is far short of total demand, which reaches as high as eight million. That means there are many opportunities offering competitive salaries for dedicated travel professionals.

The administration survey indicated that demand is highest for three particular types of travel industry professionals. The first is tour guides who can handle English conversations, have experience in planning and managing travel routes and can cope with emergencies in foreign countries. Second is supervisors for restaurants, hotels and travel agencies. And third is skilled basic staff, such as cooks, attendants and receptionists for five-star hotels.

"As an international metropolis, there are thousands of hotels in Beijing and more than 20 famed multinational hospitality corporations have invested and operate in this city," said Xing Hongzhi, manager of the Beijing Kairui Hotel.

"Currently, the difficulty we face in hotel management is in seeking appropriately internationalized professionals, who are good at both language and cultural communication, familiar with practical operations and sensitive to business trends."

Emphasis on English

The 2008 Beijing Olympic Games are sure to only boost international travelers' interest in coming to China and numbers are already on the rise. From

January to August this year, over 70 million foreigners entered this country, up 22 percent from the same period the year before, and they spent 14.8 billion yuan, a whopping 42 percent more than in 2003, according to statistics from the China National Tourism Administration.

Cao Ge, vice president of the China Nationality Travel Service Company said, "Compared with domestic travelers, leading foreign travel groups require guides must be well-rounded and have comprehensive competencies. For instance, when visiting places of historic interest like the Great Wall or the Forbidden City, they need good conversational skills so they can effectively convey interesting aspects of China's culture, customs and history."

"English has become one of the most crucial factors for us for our future careers," Xu Ning, an undergraduate in the school of tourism management at Beijing International Studies University, told *Beijing Today*. "Practical aspects are similar for everyone, therefore English is the true determiner of how far one can reach in his or her career."

Xu indicated that previous graduates of that university's tourism management program who had really honed their English chops could earn 5,000 yuan to 6,000 yuan a month and as much as 10,000 a month in peak season — very attractive figures indeed.

Educational obstacles

Concurrent to the growth of demand for talented professionals has been the dramatic increase in competition to enter tourism schools. However, many schools' programs suffer from real weaknesses in providing students with basic knowledge and practical expertise, meaning graduates still lack qualities most sought after by potential employers.

Cao Ge complained that domestic professionals in the travel field were generally not sufficiently competent for management positions, especially higher spots. Instead, he said, vocational training colleges had raised many people better oriented to operational-level positions like guides, clerks and attendants.

Fortunately, many educators seem to have acknowledged the gap between their lessons and the needs of the market, and are therefore restructuring programs to give students more practical experience that should benefit them in their later careers.

"We provide some internships to students," Cao said, "but to foster high-quality managers in this field, we tend to take people with extensive experience in management in other fields and then help them gear to the tourism industry."

Jobs

A private medical clinic in Dongcheng looking for a medical clinic secretary.

Requirements: fluent English and Mandarin with superior phone skills. Medical knowledge and terminology desirable. One-year commitment required.

Duties: Reception, phone, marketing/advertising, book-keeping, appointment scheduling for doctors.

Pay: 4,000 RMB/mo if able to perform all listed duties
Send resume to:
confidantmedical@yahoo.com

Help you to change your visa (f, x, z, j) and apply for green card

Tel: 86592919
Email: alen678@163.com
Add: Fucheng Road 132, Haidian

Mr. Chen, a Chinese Canadian, graduate from Shanghai Tongji University, proficient in English and German. Worked as a country manager of a Chinese company in the US in 1995 and emigrated to Canada in 1998. Living in Toronto at present and active in business in North America.

Interested to work as an agent for Chinese companies or to make arrangements for the establishment of rep offices in Canada and the US.

Please contact: Guanjun Geoffrey Chen
Add: 170 Forestwood Street, Richmond Hill, Ontario, Canada L4S 1Y4
Tel: 001-905-508-1700
or: 0392-3931163, 3336537 in China

A cultural media company wants to hire a foreigner for international business.

Requirements: male, British, long time in Beijing, love Chinese culture, stable, honest. Legal experience an advantage.

Contact:
sun198052@yahoo.com.cn

Female, Beijinger, 35 years old, B.A. degree, majored in English, looking for part-time job as editor (humanities-related), Mandarin teacher or translator.

Tel: 67343067
Email:
wlj6166@yahoo.com.cn

The New Century High School in Zhuozhou (60 kilometers south of Beijing), Hebei Province, is looking for native English speakers to teach English part-time. Chinese capability preferred. Four classes each month. Workloads and wages open to discussion. Please send resumes to: Feida Group Co. Ltd., Da Shiqiao Bei, Zhuozhou, Hebei

Tel: 0312-389 0898, 389 2678, or
Email:
mouyur@chinaren.com

I am Ben. I think I'm a good candidate to be the interpreter for writing and speaking between Chinese and English.

If you need a part-time translator, I'll do my best! E-mail:
natureboy_world@hotmail.com.

A retired president and CEO of two Canadian companies interested in teaching English or French in China.

Cell phone: 13520549132
Email:
Jeanguyfurois@aol.com.

(You are welcome to send positions offered and wanted info to: ayi@ynet.com. Beijing Today does not take any responsibility for the accuracy and authenticity of the information published in this column.)

Corporate HR

By Xie Lixue

Recent graduates receive surprisingly warm welcomes at the prominent accounting firm KPMG, as the company prefers hiring young people from a wide range of academic backgrounds and offers very competitive compensation packages. Hao Quan, human resources manager at KPMG, talked to *Beijing Today* through email this week to explain her company's people-oriented values and reasons for recruiting young employees.

BT: How does your company embody its concept of making people its core value?

Hao: People are always first at KPMG. As an accounting firm, we are different from many other enterprises whose products and achievements are more readily visible. What we sell are our services and the com-

Employees First at KPMG

pany's reputation, all of which are determined by our top-quality staff.

Putting priority on employees is more than a company slogan, it is an idea that pervades every aspect of the job, from training to work.

BT: Please describe your company's training system.

Hao: Every year, we put a lot towards employee training on corporate culture, professional knowledge and management concepts and skills, and the means of training are many and flexible.

We design continuous training programs for employees to boost their individual development. Professionals at all levels take charge of guiding the de-

velopment of their subordinates, in part through yearly performance evaluations.

BT: Your company has a reputation for hiring many recent graduates. Can you explain that policy?

Hao: Our recruiting plan is characterized by hiring a high percentage of university graduates. This year, our Beijing and Shanghai branches recruited around 90 recent graduates.

Recent graduates tend to have qualities we like, such as being creative, energetic, active and courageous, so we prefer to train them to get the work skills they need instead of taking people with work experience in fields related to accounting who want to shift career directions.

BT: How you decide which candidates are worth hiring?

Hao: A good personality, positive attitude and unflagging energy can help a candidate stand out.

In interviews, we don't just look for people who majored in accounting. Our firm provides a wide range of services, such as auditing, tax consultation and provision of information technology. Therefore, we need people who have mastered accounting skills but also have related background knowledge in related fields and trades.

We prefer people who match our culture and values. Integrity and honesty are the foremost factors we consider. Second is communicative ability, which we

assess through certain games or group activities. Third is potential to learn, because many practical capabilities should be picked up through actual work.

BT: Do you have any suggestions for people interested in applying for jobs at KPMG?

Hao: To current students or recent graduates starting the job seeking process, I would advise being very well prepared.

Work at accounting firms is very busy, so potential applicants should carefully consider if they are truly interested in the work content, not just in finding a nice sounding, white collar position.

Furthermore, setting definite career goals will help you impress companies during recruiting and provide later direction.



Only six months ago, a beautifully designed curriculum vita was the key to get a job. This was particularly true to many girls newly graduated. But today, DV curriculum vita and private web sites are in fashion.

Photo by Photocom

Resumes for the Digital Age

By Xie Lixue

The days of traditional written resumes are waning — already taking their places are video CVs, in which applicants can actually speak and present themselves to potential employers.

Fueling the revolution is the explosion of digital video, which is cheap and accessible even to the tech-impaired. Increasing numbers of young people are using digital video to create animated, engaging and effective CVs that leave applicants who rely on paper in the dust.

A video resume is just that, a personal introduction shot on video to allow a person to present recruiters with information on his or her background, educational achievements and work experi-

ence. These days, digital video is allowing even lay people to put together increasingly sophisticated programs and then post them on job-hunting websites.

Video resumes first appeared in China around two years ago, most created by artists or returned overseas students, but they have quickly become adopted by university students and graduates ready to hit the competitive domestic job market.

Depending on the professionalism of production, video resumes can cost from under 100 yuan into the thousands to make.

Video CVs can literally speak volumes more about a candidate than a written equivalent. They are especially appropriate

for jobs in broadcasting, as a literal example of a person's skills, or any other fields where personal presence is important.

A Mr. Li, a student at Guangzhou University, said he made a video CV, figuring it was more likely to get a response from employers because it would stand out from their piles of paper.

Companies also welcome the new technology, in part because it may be harder to exaggerate one's skills and experience in video testimony than on paper. Moreover, well-done videos are significantly more entertaining and descriptive than the thousands of traditional resumes many human resources managers have to sort through every year.

This is not to say that a vid-

eo CV is a definite ticket to getting a job. For one thing, because the field of video resume production is relatively new, quality can be low. That means that people looking to make a video resume should think carefully about where they go and who they hire to create what will be their first impressions to potential employers.

A Beijing-based English newspaper is looking for reporters, freelancers and editors.

Chinese applicants should have university degrees in English or related majors and media experience.

Foreigners from the UK and US with relevant media experience preferred.

Please send resumes and writing samples to: hr@ynet.com.

Secrets to Finding Good Agents

By Zhang Nan

China has become an important source of international students for universities in the US, UK, Australia, New Zealand and other countries. Already seen on campuses across those countries, Chinese students' presences are only going to rise as increasing numbers of domestic young people head abroad to further their educations.

Of course, studying overseas is no simple matter. Prospective students and their parents have to first face many questions, such as which universities and fields of studies are right, how can studying abroad benefit future career development and how can international students fit into foreign surroundings.

Helping to answer such concerns is the major role of study abroad agents, professionals whose careers have risen in direct proportion to the increasing numbers of students heading out of China.

A good agent can be very helpful, but agencies are not trustworthy, or even licensed, and only get into the game to make easy profits off overeager and gullible students and parents.

"In general, the Chinese market is more dependent on agents than elsewhere," Michael Bartlett, the project director of the Asia Head Office of Aspect Education Group, told *Beijing Today* in an interview last Thursday.

Aspect Education Group is one of the world's largest private education companies with 40 years of experience and a total of 27 schools in English-speaking countries. It offers language and university preparation programs as well as courses in design and art studies and business and technology studies.

During the interview, Bartlett shared his opinions of domestic agents and offered sage advice to Chinese students hoping to further their studies overseas.

Chinese students:

Beijing Today: Nowadays, more and more Chinese students are rushing to study in foreign countries. Some people do not think that studying abroad is the best means for them to better develop themselves and set up solid future careers. What is your opinion?

Michael Bartlett: The question of 'better development' is so vague, and many students cite this as their reason to go and study overseas, without really thinking about what it means. Certainly going overseas to study doesn't guarantee a great and wealthy career. For some people it is absolutely the right thing to do, for others not. The important thing is to think carefully about what you want to study and why. Then think about whether it would be advantageous to go overseas and if so where.

BT: In your opinion, how should students go about choosing universities and majors?

MB: The key thing here is to start with thinking about what you would like to do as a career. Then look carefully into



Students and parents crowd the booth of Jinjili Overseas Education Co., one of Beijing's most reputable study abroad agencies, at the Beijing International Education Expo 2004 on August 25.



Michael Bartlett, project director at the Asia Head Office of Aspect Education Group

Photo by Zhang Nan

different majors to see which one would best prepare you for this, and then, and only then, choose a good university for that course. This is a difficult and time-consuming process.

Many people look at a university league table (which in the UK aren't official by any means, most Brits don't take them seriously) and then try and find a course that is vaguely OK for them at that university. This is the wrong way to do it.

Studying between one and

three years of a major that you aren't suited to or don't enjoy will be a real disadvantage. Also make sure you look carefully into the course details. Do take a close look, because the same major name can mean a totally different course depending on the university.

Chinese vs foreign agencies:

BT: What do you think of Chinese agencies?

MB: Like in every business area anywhere in the world, there are good and bad companies. There are some which really take time to listen and give you honest, genuine and reliable advice. Others offer a much lower level of professionalism and can be motivated by other things than your success studying overseas.

Beware too of unrealistic promises. Some agents make these to get your business but later you find the facts are very different. However there are many very professional ones out there who have excellent university links, frequently visit the UK and other countries and really give ex-

cellent advice.

BT: What is the agency market like in foreign countries?

MB: Well, different places do different things, but in general the Chinese market is more dependent on agents than elsewhere. In European countries for example, agents do exist, but they tend to organize more short-term group courses. Most students planning long-term courses, including university programs, would organize things themselves. This is partly because there is no visa needed for these citizens and that is a very important service the agents here provide.

BT: How can students choose the right agencies to help them?

MB: Ask lots of questions, speak to previous students and, as I said before, be careful of unrealistic promises. An agent who is realistic and will give you unbiased and fair advice is much more important than someone who promises the earth.

BT: Competition among

Chinese agencies is fierce. How has Aspect established a position in the market and what are Aspect's advantages?

MB: Aspect is an education group, so we really don't compete with agents at all. We are not an agent and never deal directly with students. We are really here to support the agents we cooperate with and provide all the information and materials they require to make sure students are well-informed. Co-operating with Chinese agencies is how we conduct our business in China.

Suggestions:

BT: Do you have some suggestions for Chinese agencies? Or can you provide some experiences of how foreign agencies work for Chinese agencies to use as reference?

MB: I think overall Chinese agents are as good as anywhere else in the world, and many have excellent knowledge of overseas education. The only advice I can give is that frequent trips, as many agents make, are really important to understand the real details of schools, universities and places, so they can give first hand and reliable advice.

BT: Do you have any advice for students who intend to go abroad to study?

MB: First, it is very important to choose a good language and university preparation school that has solid experience in teaching English, study skills, research methodology etc. to foreign students. This is vital in getting prepared for university studies and I believe that Aspect Education Group is one of the best choices, as we have such long experience in doing this. Second, as I mentioned before, it is very important to look carefully at course content and make sure you chose the right course first and the university second.

Making Sense of MBAs

By Zhang Nan

When deciding where to pursue a business degree overseas, many Chinese students look no further than the top schools in the US. But in reality, few will get in, meaning many will set themselves up for nothing more than disappointment. These universities are extremely selective to begin with, and the growing number of applicants means application requirements and competition is only rising.

Fortunately, elite American schools are not the only places to look for solid MBA programs. Here are three tips for finding the right school for you and avoiding some of the common mistakes in applying to MBA programs.

Wide the range

Smart applicants will consider a range of choices and apply to a diverse group of universities. Basic rankings of MBA programs do not mean everything. There are many top-flight programs in the US, such as those at Rice University and Dartmouth University, that offer very competitive education, high employment rates and good networks but that do not necessarily make the cut of the five highest rated programs.

Is an MBA for you?

MBAs are not the only degrees offered by business schools, but are certainly the most common, which can be detrimental because of the near ubiquity of people with MBAs in the US and in major Chinese cities. Depending on what they want to do, many people who pursue MBAs would do as well, if not better, by going after master's degrees in technology management, engineering and management, information systems or accounting.

These days, an MBA is no longer insurance of finding a job in the US, particularly for Chinese students who have little experience in the American work world. Thus, other degrees may be more likely to lead to rewarding employment. Not only are people who hold master's in accounting (MACC) degrees more apt to find jobs, they come out of graduate school having paid nearly half the tuition of their MBA classmates.

GMAT is key

Acing the GMAT test is crucially important to getting into a good business school. Because universities' admissions workers have no way of really confirming claimed work and academic experience of international applicants, GMAT scores are their best barometers of potential students' abilities. Figure on needing a school of at least 700 to get into at top 30 business school in the US.

US' Best Business Schools

By Zhang Nan

At the end of September, the *Wall Street Journal* published its latest rankings of world business schools, divided into three categories: an overall list of US schools, a list of regional US schools and a list of international schools.

The three lists were created based on surveys of employers' attitudes towards different business schools to determine which institutions best prepared students for the work world.

The surveys were conducted on-line between October 2003 and this March and involved nearly 2,500 employers. Participants ranked MBA programs according to their own experiences with graduates. In order to guarantee the rankings were well weighted, every school had to be judged by at least 21 employers and 71 schools ended up getting graded.

Top five overall business schools in the US:

University of Michigan (Ross)
Carnegie Mellon University (Tepper)
Dartmouth College (Tuck)
University of Pennsylvania (Wharton)
University of Chicago

Top five regional business schools in the US:

Purdue University (Krannert)
Vanderbilt University (Owen)
Ohio State University (Fisher)
University of Maryland (Smith)
Brigham Young University (Marriott)

Top five international business schools:

IMD International, Switzerland
University of London (London Business School), UK
ESADE, Spain
HEC School of Management, Paris, France
Massachusetts Institute of Technology (Sloan), US

Ask Ayi:

Q: I am studying information management and intend to study for a master's in math or statistics in the US. Will it be easy to get a scholarship?

— any616

A: It is not easy to obtain scholarships in the US. You have to do very, very well in your studies, and it is nearly impossible for you to get offers if you intend to change majors for your master's degree course, because it is hard to prove that you have real strengths in that field.

Q: I am a senior student in electronic communications, but I have not done very well in my studies. I am concerned it could have a negative effect on my applications for a master's course in the UK. So, my plan is to get a master's in a Chinese university first and then apply overseas. Would that make it easier for me to get in?

— kb8ronald

A: You can be sure that foreign universities will take your undergraduate marks into consideration when you apply, even if you have a master's degree from a Chinese university. Gen-

erally speaking, the requirement is that a student must have average undergraduate scores of at least 80.

Foreign universities will also carefully consider the reputation of the university you went to in China. They are likely to check if your university is in the 211 project or if it is a key university.

To put it simply, you should have scores of 75 or higher. That means you'd better work hard your last year to try to raise your average.

(Edited by Ruan Ying / Zhang Nan)

Notice

Next Monday, Sue Edwards, academic director of Aspect Education Group, will chat in our Study Abroad Salon on pursuing education overseas, including how to choose universities and majors.

You are welcome to log in at: <http://bjtoday.ynet.com> or forward your questions to the host, Ayi, at: ayi@ynet.com.

Time: 2-3 pm, Monday (October 11)

通知

下周一(10月11日)下午两点到三点, Aspect教育集团学术总监爱德华兹女士将做客“留学聊天室”,介绍如何选择学校和专业。

欢迎届时登陆: <http://bjtoday.ynet.com>, 或把问题发给主持人阿义: ayi@ynet.com。

By Wang Yao
nyone who has actually played golf knows it is far harder than it looks.

Blasting drives and sinking putts like Tiger Woods only comes with painstaking practice and a steady hand, boosted by the newest in golf equipment, like that on offer at the Aoke Dragonfly Golf Supermarket.

The store stocks everything needed by beginners to golf pros and provides knowledgeable assistance in picking the right shoes, clubs and more. Supplementary information is available through teaching videos and the latest copies of major golfing magazines.

Most of the store's clubs are imported, and many of the big names are represented. Store owner Li Qi recommended a Titleist club he said was the choice of PGA players, a Callaway club for its responsible feel, and a putter from Ping, all among the shop's best sellers. Club prices range from 1,000 yuan to 3,500 yuan.

Carry and protect clubs in style with a quality, bag, available at Aoke Dragonfly in more than 20 styles. One of the most eye-catching is a well-designed, bright yellow canvas golf bag made by French mark Le Coq Sportif. More conventional models from Polo, Mizuno, Callaway, Sunwik and Titleist are available for 1,000 to 3,000 yuan.

With the basic equipment covered, it's time to think shoes.

Callaway's 2004 line (500-2,000 yuan) have the looks of fine walking shoes and sport comfort insoles and spikes made of rubber and resin to provide optimum feel and traction. Back in the clubhouse, the spikes easily twist out to allow the shoes to go across far more than the greens.

The store also stocks all kinds of other golf necessities and amenities, from tees and balls to socks, hats and trinkets.

Where: No. 58-2, Di'anmen Dongdajie, Dongcheng **Open:** 9 am - 8:30 pm **Tel:** 8403 5660



Titleist driver, 3,500 yuan

By Wang Yao

Many billiards fans dream of having their own tables at home – but given the realities of Chinese apartment sizes, that is all but impossible to most Beijing pool heads.

Enter the Taiqiu Zhuanying store near Jiaodaokou, which sells a high-quality, mini table that offers much of the fun of pool and snooker in far less space. The meter-long table is made from attractive rose wood, treated to protect it and keep it from warping, and features a real felt surface. A whole set of the shrunken parlor game, including balls, cues and chalk, goes for just 500 yuan.

The store also serves the lucky

few who do have enough room in their homes to house full-sized pool or snooker tables. A range of models and brands, including Riley from the UK, Regal from Taiwan and Biaoli from Guangdong Province, are available. Inside the shop stands one impressive model, a beautiful table crafted from imported rose wood, with a fireproof surface, cues handmade of maple wood and Belgian crystal balls, considered the world's best. The price? 11,800 yuan.

Pool fans interested in getting better equipped without such a major purchase can

School of Pool



check out the line of quality cues, mostly made in China using materials like maple, oak and sandalwood imported from the UK. Cues of all sizes, weights, styles and prices are available to cater to the personal game. There are even high-tech models, like carbon fiber cues made by the Taiwanese brand Smartcue that

Gettin' With It

By Wang Yao

Kids in the capital have picked up on hip-hop culture and run with it, forging their own brands of rhymes, beats and fashions. Riding the trend is the SLQ, or Shengliqi, shop, which stocks all kinds of items to keep hip hoppers looking sharp.

Since the days of Run-DMC, thick chains have been musts in any self-respecting hip-hop kid's wardrobe, and SLQ is properly equipped with necklaces in over 60 styles. While many rappers like to sport real diamonds on their bling, local fans have more limited means, and store owner Liu Zichen understands, adorning



his pieces with rhinestones and other imitation gems. Even with prices running just 60 yuan to 190 yuan, customers can still get their necklaces custom made to spell their names or alter-ego MC call signs.

No less important to the hip hop look than the right rope is a visible watch, like one by maker Jacobo & Co (400 yuan). The watch sports a wide face divided into four different colored time

zones, all surrounded by fake diamonds with a white leather wristband.

Do up your dome with one of SLQ's hats, including real American du rags, stretchable caps made of pantyhose-like material that fit tight around the forehead and come in a range of colors. They fetch 100 yuan each.

Celebrate love of Outkast, arguably the most fashionable hip-hop stars around today, with a black leather coat from 'Kast's own clothing line. The liner is printed with the group's symbol, a big "O" with wings.

Where: NO.C-10, underground market at Longfu Guangchang, Longfusi, Dongcheng **Open:** 10 am - 7 pm **Tel:** 13911681994

A Glorious Mess

By Sabu

The Messy store in Sanlitun's new Na-Li Mall revels in disorder, as its name indicates. Scattered throughout the shop is an incredible range of goods, from dolls and masks to jewelry and home decorations, all imported from distant lands and all with distinctly exotic feels.

Yet the goods themselves are anything but messy – most are very elegant, such as necklaces adorned with pendants from Africa, India and others made of seashells, silver and crystal (100-280 yuan), silver earrings from Nepal (38-150 yuan) and ivory bracelets (180 yuan).

Other striking items from



Thai puppets, 480 yuan each

Nepal include beautiful silk scarves and blouses woven with silver threads, handmade paper lamps (280 yuan), bird totem pendants made of brass (680 yuan) and an embroidered bag adorned with pearls.

Even simple things can add real spice to a home – like the store's range of unusual door handles imported from India, of which Messy claims to be the exclusive local retailer (280 yuan each, 480 for two).

For a bolder statement, try an elegant Italian mask that looks straight from a Venice carnival and can bring character to any room for only 280 yuan. Along similar lines are elaborate puppets from Thailand (480 yuan each) and wooden figures of cats, giraffes and other animals (40 to 150 yuan).

Careful details turn simple soaps into practical works of art at Messy. Its line of delicately shaped, all-natural soaps are moisturizing and soothing thanks to the presence of aromatic plant and flower essences. Shoppers can even make their own soaps in the store's easy process for very reasonable prices.

Where: No.6 Na-li Mall, North Sanlitun Bar Street, Chaoyang **Open:** 11:30 am - 8:30 pm **Tel:** 8192 8424

should never warp and come in bright, dazzling colors.

Taiqiu Zhuanying also has balls – lots of balls. Some come with specially hardened surfaces to help preserve the life of table felt, others carry bold slogans, designs and brand names, like bright red "Budweiser" balls.

To round out a pool set, or work on one's game, there is even a selection of video tapes and pool-inspired nicknacks, like clocks and keys as well as more useful items for polishing balls and stroking sticks.

Where: Ping'an Dajie, 30 meters north of Kuanjie intersection, Chaoyang **Open:** 9 am - 8:30 pm **Tel:** 6400 0683

Chasing Beauty

American Shannon Lee enjoys few things more than the pleasures of a great haircut, a proper manicure or a fine facial. In this new regular column, Shannon prowls the city's countless salons to recommend establishments where Beijingers can be sure to come out more beautiful.

Meirong on the Mind

By Shannon Lee

Beijing's arid climate and pollution has taken its toll on my face, my skin getting drier and duller everyday. Not too long ago, my skin was in need of a beauty 911!



Shannon Lee

A girlfriend of mine (a born and raised Beijinger) let me in on her beauty secret. She told me about *meirong*, or full facial, Chinese-style. With meirong on the mind, I set out to find the right salon for me, and decided to try out Mengguangyuan in Xizhimen. For 100 yuan, I received an hour-and-a-half trial facial treatment.

I was led into a small and stark, but clean and relaxing facial room with three tables for clients. I ended up lying down during the entire facial. First, the attendant washed my face with a mild cleanser and then I lay under a steamer while my eyebrows were plucked and shaped. I was not used to the Chinese style of eyebrow shaping – the brows are plucked with tweezers and then a small razor is used to get the smaller hairs. After that my T-zone (forehead, nose and chin) was exfoliated with a small loop tool and a soothing astringent was applied.

From then on it was pure heaven. My face was massaged with special gel and serious attention given to the facial muscles in wrinkle prone areas such as the side of the mouth and the corners of the eyes. Then a deep moisturizing cream was applied to the eye area and an electric tool with a metal ball tip encircled the eye (this is supposed to prevent wrinkles; I can attest that it at least felt great). To finish it off, moisturizing gel pads were applied to my eyes and a mask was applied to the rest of my face. While the mask set, the attendant gave me a shoulder, arm, and hand massage for about 15 minutes. After the mask was removed I sat up to check out my face – my brows looked great and my dry skin

was quenched.

At first I was skeptical about the benefits of meirong; I thought that the effects would go away in an hour or two. However, after a few more trials I am now hooked! Meirong is no longer a beauty procedure for me, it is a way of life. Every few weeks I escape for 90 minutes from the noise and stress of Beijing life and pamper my skin.

The marvels of meirong are not limited to women. More and more men are indulging in the same procedure, minus the brow job. Most salons offer discount cards for repeat customers, and bargaining is possible at many establishments.

How to get good meirong:

Define your skin's needs. Dryness was my main problem so I looked for a facial that focused on moisture.

Inquire about what line of products are used. Most are Chinese brands, so trial and error may be necessary to find the right stuff.

Ask how long a facial will take – most are between an hour and 90 minutes. If you are pressed for time, tell the attendant beforehand.

Before things get started, tell the attendant how you like your brows. Thick brows can always be made thinner, but once they pluck, you can't go back, at least for a while.

Where: Xizhimen Jiaoda Jiayuan Building B, Xizhimen, Haidian **Open:** 9 am - 10 pm **Tel:** 8216 1953



Personal Classifieds

Accommodation

Apartment in Chaoyang Garden for sale, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 1 living room. 120 square meters. US \$140,000. 31st floor. Contact: Ms. Zhang, 13051436459

For Sale and Wanted

Joy wants to find an American TV series called *Once and Again*, featuring Evan Rachel Wood, the star of *Thirteen*. Contact: 13810871726, Email: yangyanrd@163.com

Secondhand laptop for sale. A very reliable Compaq Armada bought overseas, Genuine Intel Pentium processor 48 MB ram, good for word processing. The printer is a Hewlett Packard desk jet 200, and the scanner (new) is a Uniscan 5a. I would consider a swap for a large TV or a cell phone with the capacity to take photos. Contact: dbeijing@australia.edu

Professional Help

A foreign male, 39 years old, living in Beijing for five years, is seeking a full-time or part-time job anywhere in China. He speaks fluent English, French and Chinese. He is qualified with a Master's degree in Business Law and a Ph.D in Economics from Peking University. Contact: emanudi@hotmail.com

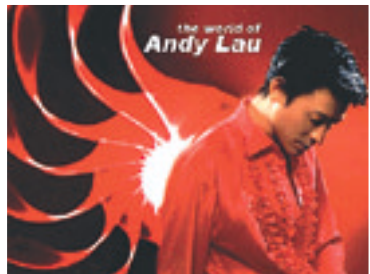
Language Exchange

Aged 27, a professional English tour guide, looking for foreigners from USA, Canada, Australia to improve oral English. I can be your free guide to explore Beijing and teach you Chinese. Email: ymbevis@msn.com, 8915 0339

A Chinese girl studying in Beijing Institute of Clothing technical now is looking for a language exchange partner to improve her English. Her MSN: suesunyang1985@hotmail.com, Email:sue_sun_yang@yahoo.com.cn

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Music



Andy Lau Solo Concert

A star of over 100 films and one of Asia's most popular singers, Andy Lau is to give a solo concert in Beijing. For all fans of Andy Lau, this is a rare opportunity to enjoy his singing live in concert.

Where: Beijing Workers' Stadium, Chaoyang **When:** Saturday, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 180-1,680 yuan **Tel:** 6417 7845

The Music of the Soul – Andrea Bocelli

The long-awaited concert by Italian tenor Andrea Bocelli is upon us. Bocelli is regarded as one of the best tenors in



Humor But Profound Loneliness

These oil paintings by Luan Xiaojie are filled with black humor and profound loneliness. All the works feature the same subject, a strange looking character, playing meaningless games with string balls, small stools, mirrors, and other utensils.

Without a clear description of the identity, gender or nationality, this child is representative of modern China and even the life-style of people of all colors in the present world, experiencing a rapid pace of development, in material conditions and structural changes.

Where: Qin Gallery, 1-1E Huawei Li, Enjoy Paradise, Chaoyang **When:** October 8-31, daily 9:30 am – 5 pm October 22 **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8779 0461

Sudden Autumn Wind

The exhibition features watercolors, oil paintings, and woodcuts by young and promising artists in China today. This is a joint art exhibition welcoming the arrival of autumn in the city.

Where: Creation Gallery, north end of Ritan Lu, Chaoyang **When:** daily 10 am – 7 pm until October 15 **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8561 7570



the world. His singing simply touches all human hearts.

Since 1990, he has conquered the world with his astounding voice, shooting to fame with *Time to Say Goodbye*, which he sang with Sarah Brightman.

Where: Great Hall of the People **When:** October 15, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 300-2,900 yuan **Tel:** 6608 1188

Seventh Beijing International Music Festival

The Shanghai Opera Chorus and the China Philharmonic Orchestra open the Seventh Beijing International Music Festival with Charles Gounod's opera *Romeo and Juliet* in five acts. Conducted by Yu Long.

Where: Poly Theatre, 14 Dongzhimen Nandajie, Chaoyang **When:** October 14 and 16, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 50-1,000 yuan **Tel:** 6501 1854



The modern oil and ink paintings by artist Luo Qi will be exhibited at the Qin Gallery. Luo is noted as one of the most famous contemporary Chinese artists to emerge in the 1990s. The works are fervent and vivid, engulfed

Exhibitions

POETRY AND ABSTRACT



in action. Line and resonance of colour manifest fierce emotion.

Where: Qin Gallery, 1-1E Huawei Li, Enjoy Paradise, Chaoyang **When:** daily 9:30 am – 5 pm until October 22 **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8779 0461

Performances



Women in Uniform

The National Ballet of China will stage the ballet *The Red Detachment of Women*. Hailed as a masterpiece by international critics, the ballet has been performed over four decades since its debut.

Where: Beijing Exhibition Hall Theater, 135 Xizhimenwai Dajie, Xicheng **When:** till October 10, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 120 -1,280 yuan **Tel:** 6831 6677

Jazz from Germany

The Florian Ross Jazz Trio from Koln, Germany, is to tour Beijing. Florian Ross, born in 1972 in Pforzheim, Germany, is an incredibly talented piano player and composer of modern music. The band has won many awards, including first place in the Thad Jones Wettbewerbs competition organized by Danish Radio Big Band in 2000.

Where: Small Concert Hall of the Central Conservatory of Music, 43 Baojiajie, Xicheng **When:** October 12, 7:30 pm **Tel:** 8251 2909

Movies



Two Brothers

Directed by Jean-Jacques Annaud, starring Guy Pearce, Jean-Claude Dreyfus, Freddie Highmore and David Gant. Two tigers are separated as cubs and taken into captivity, only to be reunited years later by an explorer who forces them to fight each other. It is a great adventure that is both touching and thrilling. An extraordinary story of two tigers.

Where: UME International Cineplex, (Huaxing Guoji Yingcheng), 44 Shuangyushu Kexueyuan, Haidian **When:** from

October 9 **Tel:** 6261 2851

Pinocchio

Roberto Benigni brings one of the worlds most beloved characters to the screen with this delightful live action adaptation of Carlo Collodi's classic story. Pinocchio's ever-curious spirit opens the door to one wild adventure after another, despite guidance from the beautiful Blue Fairy and the love of his father Gepetto. Directed by Roberto Benigni, starring Roberto Benigni and Nicoletta Braschi. Italian with English subtitles.

Where: Italian Embassy, 2 Dong'erjie, Sanlitun **When:** September 30, 7 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6532 2187



Activities



Enter the 2005 BTV Spring Festival Arts from Our Land Competition.

Beijing Television's annual Arts from Our Land competition provides an opportunity for foreign friends who are interested in Chinese arts and culture to display their talents before an international audience. Amateur performers from all over the world have enjoyed meeting others who share their interest, making new friends as they work together to hone their skills in such Chinese art forms such as singing, cross-talk, martial arts, dance and traditional opera.

In the 2005 competition, performers will compete in three areas: Chinese language ability, skill challenge and arts performance.

Beijing TV is now accepting applications for the competition, if you are interested, please contact us immediately. Entry forms must be in before November 30.

Tel: 6842 9614

E-mail:

caiyidasai@yahoo.com.cn

TV and Radio Highlights

HBO

8 Friday

Ripley's Game 9 pm

9 Saturday

Cradle 2 The Grave 9 pm

10 Sunday

Spider-Man 11:10 pm

11 Monday

The Tuxedo 9:00 pm

12 Tuesday

Men in Black II 8:30 pm

13 Wednesday

Life as a House 9 pm

14 Thursday

Willard 9 pm

CCTV-9

Monday – Friday

Around China 6:30 am

Cultural Express 8:30 am

Nature and Science /

Chinese Civilization 11:30 am

Cultural Express 2:30 pm

Nature and Science /

Chinese Civilization 5:30 pm

Dialogue 7:30 pm

News Updates /

Asia Today 8 pm

Sports Scene 11:15 pm

Saturday

Travelogue 9:30 am

Center Stage 11:30 am

Sunday

Sports Weekend 10 am

Documentary 10:30 am

This Week 12:30 am

China Radio International 91.5 FM

Monday – Friday

Easy FM Afternoon 2-7 pm

Fun in Beijing 5-5:30 pm

Joy FM 9:05-11 pm

Saturday

Music Memories 8:05-11 am

Euro Hit 40 12:05-1 pm

Musique Sans Frontières 6:05-8 pm

Joy FM 9:05-11 pm

Sunday

Music Memories 8:05-11 am

Jazz Beat 6:05-8 pm

Joy FM 9:05-11 pm

We are glad to receive your feedback. We will print employment, language-exchange and accommodation info for individuals. Feel free to e-mail us at bjtodayinfo@ynet.com or call 6590 2518

By Zhang Jianzhong

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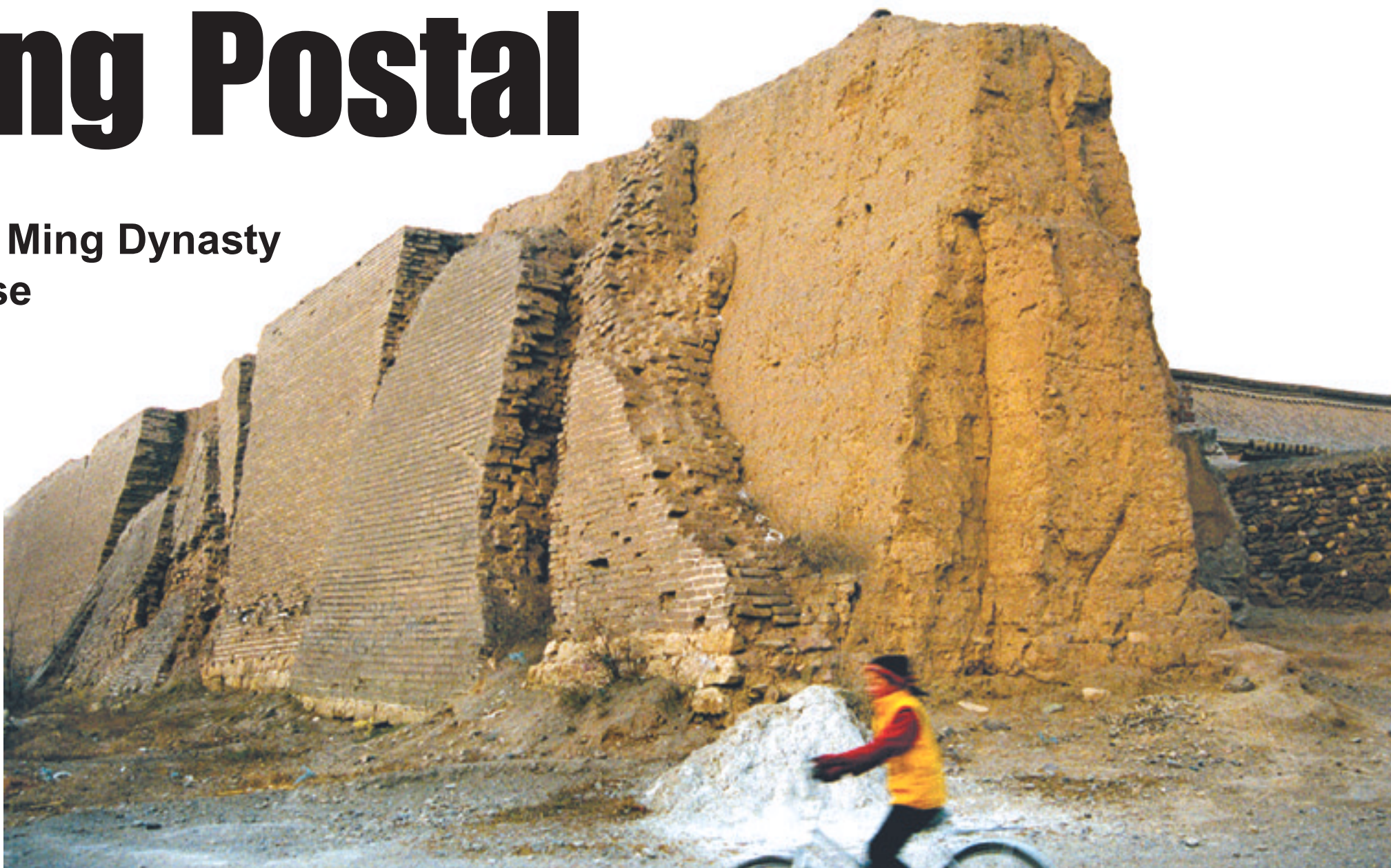
Aromatic Oil Massage (RMB 200 – 580), Body/Foot Massage (RMB100). Service at your home is also available. Add: (South of Kerry Centre) Rm 703, e-Tower, 12 Guanghua Lu, Chaoyang (光华路12号数码01大厦703室, 嘉里中心南侧)



Going Postal

Visit to a Ming Dynasty posthouse

A weekend is just enough time for a 150-kilometer drive out the Beijing-Zhangjiakou Expressway to experience something ancient and very different to the modern amenities of Beijing. Jimingyi, the Rooster Crowing Posthouse (鸡鸣驿) lies on an ancient messenger relay route, along which the orders of the emperor were carried by messengers on horseback, day and night, through rain, hail and shine.

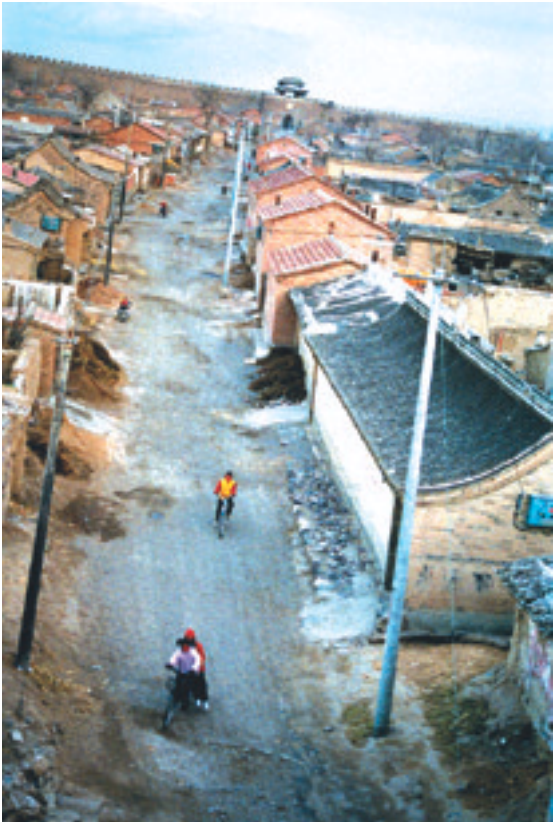


Jimingyi city wall

Photos by Imaginechina



Jimingyi south gate (below) and gate tower (above)



The main street of Jimingyi

By Shida Zhu

The posthouse, in what is now Huailai County, Hebei, was established during the Yuan Dynasty when Kublai Khan went on a western expedition. It was refurbished and expanded in 1420 during the reign of Emperor Yongle of the Ming Dynasty, and has played a major role in the history of Chinese posts and communications. When the northern warlord government decided in 1913 to eliminate the ancient posthouse system and set up a modern post office system, Jimingyi went into decline. However, it remains today the biggest and best preserved ancient posthouse in China.

A small city in itself, the posthouse was built on a north-south axis. The eastern and northern city walls are still almost intact, while sections of the western and southern walls are broken. The eastern and western gates are built in a double-arched brick structure, and are connected by a thoroughfare covered with grit. There are only remains of the outer city defensive walls, the once high and magnificent gate towers now little more than wooden skeletons pointing to the sky, presenting a desolate picture of the storms and stresses of history.

There are eight ancient temples, such as the Confucian Temple, the Temple of the Dragon King, and the Temple of Fortune, all in very poor shape in the town. The Temple of Eternal Tranquility is the oldest, with a history of more than 800 years. Visitors can see wall paintings from the Ming Dynasty that are still surprisingly complete and fresh in color. From the sizes of the temples, you may see the influence of Buddhism, Taoism and Christianity in the city.

Empress Dowager Cixi passed through this strategically important posthouse fleeing the Western allied forces that were attacking Beijing in the late 19th century. The house where she dwelt is still standing.

The posthouse city at the crossroads was also a business hub in ancient times. According to

inscriptions on a stone slab, it boasted six pawnshops, nine general stores, four oil shops and a number of tea houses and inns where animals and men might rest.

The richly historical flavor of the city has provided backdrops for a number of movies. In one film version of the Chinese classic, *Journey to the West*, the first kiss between the hero and heroine takes place on the city wall.

There are no modern hotels. Family inns provide board and lodging for only 10 yuan.

From Jimingyi, it is just a short drive to another ancient city, Xuanhua (宣化). When the first emperor of the Qin Dynasty unified China, he set up 36 prefectures. Xuanhua, called Shanggu then, was one of them. It is north of Jimingyi, on the Beijing-Zhajiakou railway line. During the Ming Dynasty, it was one of the nine major defence cities on the northern border, charged with repulsing attacks from the northern Tartars. The Ming city walls remain, complete with a whole system of defence capacities.

Getting there: Take the train at Yongdingmen Railway Station in the south of Beijing and get off at Shacheng. Take a bus bound for Xiahuayuan at the square near the statue of Dong Chengrui, a martyr of the liberation war, and get off at Jimingyi. Alternatively, drive directly to Xuanhua via the Beijing-Zhangjiakou Expressway.

Ancient Village of Stone

Some of ancient Chinese legends have much to do with stone. In *Journey to the West*, the Monkey King is said to be born from a rock, while the goddess Nu Wa cuts rocks to support the falling sky. The love stories of the classic *A Dream of Red Mansions* were recorded on a huge rock. All these legends are related in one way or another to stone culture.

One cannot help but be impressed by the efforts to carve a living and a unique lifestyle out of stone by the residents of Yujiacun (于家村).

The village lies 15 kilometers from the seat of Jingjing county, near Shijiazhuang, an important city on the Beijing-Guangzhou railway.

Near the Taihang Mountains in the western part of the province, it is rich in ancient stone houses, stone streets, stone wells and stone terraced fields, a virtual encyclopedia of stone culture, so to speak. It is one of the important historical sites under the province's key protection.

The Yus in the village are the offspring of Yu Qian, a politician and national hero of the Ming Dynasty. His grandson Yu Youdao moved to the barren, rocky wasteland in 1468. According to his notes, he "built houses of wood and stone for residence and hunted deer for food."

He had five sons and their descendants have lived in the village for 24 generations over more than 500 years. The hard natural environment has tempered the character of the villagers. They have chiselled through the rocks that lie everywhere, turning them into residential houses and daily utilities, and used them to build terraced fields on the rocky mountain slopes.

The village has six east-west streets, seven north-south streets and 18 dead-ended *hutongs* all covered with rocks, huge and small, color-patterned or black-green, as if part of a vivid picture of stone. The age-old stone gate towers lead to stone caves, flat-roofed stone houses or stone houses with tiles that are well wedged to the surrounding terrains. When you roam through the village, you will be moved by the sturdiness and toughness of the spirit of the local farmers' stone culture, a life virtually chiselled out of rock. If it is raining, you will see all the stones in the streets that have been ground by human feet and animal heels over the ages glitter in the raindrops. It is an ideal setting for an expression of poetic sentimentality and nostalgia.

The grandest of all the stone houses is the Sihelouyuan (四合楼院) or the Quadruple Yard, a towering brick structure on stone foundations built in the late Ming Dynasty. It has over one hundred rooms, covering nearly 1,000 square meters. It is separated into the eastern yard and the western yard, rising from the north to

the south.

On the second floor of the spacious and tall main building are guest rooms with thick wooden beams. Neighboring the guest rooms is a long corridor offering magnificent views of Nanshan Mountain. A row of flat houses stands on the western side. They were the rooms for the hired farm hands and other workers. The family produced 12 scholars during the Ming and Qing dynasties, a remarkable achievement for a family living in such a secluded mountainous area.

At the eastern entrance of the village is the Qingliangge (清凉阁), the Clear and Cool Pavilion, also named Shenxiange, the Pavilion of Fairies. It is the landmark building of the village. Dating back to 1581, the ninth year of the reign of Emperor Wanli, village legend has it that the entire structure was built by Yu Xichun, a man of immense strength. Yu intended to build nine stories, however when he came to the second story, he injured his hand. You can still see the blood stains on the stone ground. The third story, a wooden structure, was added later by the villagers. The columns and beams are painted or carved. At the eastern door hangs a stone board on which two boys embracing a spotted deer are carved. Strangely, it dances in a breeze while it remains stationary in a gale. At the southern door is a sculptured dragon head carved in fluent and round strokes. The fan-shaped board over the door is inscribed with the name of the pavilion in gold.

Another surprise is that such a large building has no foundations. It stands on a base of huge rocks. Some of these rocks are several meters long, some weigh several tons and others are as crude and primitive as any you may find in barren mountain ravine.

The noodles made by the villagers by hand from sweet potato flour and wheat flour are a local speciality. Lodging in a stone yard home with three meals included costs 15 yuan per day.

Getting there: Take bus 203 bound for Jingjing from Shijiazhuang Railway Station (5 yuan). Then take the bus bound for Yujiacun village in Laowuo (3 yuan).